The Christian's Work and Reward.

Matth.11.29,30. *Take my yoke upon you, & learn of me. For my yoke is easie & my burthen is light.*
Revel. 2,10. *Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.*
1 Cor.9.24,25. *So run that ye may obtain. Every man that striveth for y mastery is temperate in all things: now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible.*

THE TRUTH OF Christian Religion: IN SIX BOOKS.

Written in LATIN BY

HUGO GROTIUS.

AND

Now Translated into ENGLISH,

With the Addition

Of a SEVENTH BOOK.

By *SIMON PATRICK* DEAN of *PETERBURGH*, and CHAPLAIN in Ordinary to His MAJESTY.

The Second Edition Corrected.

LONDON,

Printed for *Rich. Royston*, Bookseller to His Most Sacred *Majesty*, at the *Angel* in *Amen*-Corner, MDCLXXXIII.

To the Right Honourable

WILLIAM
Earl of *BEDFORD*

Knight of the Most Noble Order of the GARTER, *&c.*

My very Good Lord and Patron.

My Lord,

I Am so desirous to express my Thankfulness to Your Lordship, as for all the rest, so especially, for the last Favour You have done me, in contributing so freely to the giving me some ease from that burden which grew too heavy for me; that I make bold to prefix Your Lordships Name to This Book of a great Man in another Nation; which I have Translated, and will live, I be-

 lieve,

lieve, as long as Learning and Religion shall last among us.

Whereby your Lordship will see that I have only exchanged, not given over my Labours; and that I intend not to be less diligent in my station, than when I preached more; but rather study industriously to serve the Publick good some other way.

Which that I might promote, I have augmented this Work of *Grotius*, by the Addition of another *Book*: not equal indeed in strength of reasoning, and variety of reading to the foregoing; but in brevity and perspicuity, I hope, nothing inferiour: And, being a building relying, in great part, upon his Foundations, will stand as firm and unshaken, as those which excel it in beauty, and neatness of contrivance.

Such

Such as it is, I humbly present it to your Lordship; and praying God that the whole Work may have some effect for the reclaiming those that are irreligious; or the setling those who are wavering and doubtful; and the exciting us all, to hold fast the Truth, as it is in the Lord Jesus, I remain

MY LORD,

Your Lordships most Humble

and obliged Servant,

S. PATRICK.

A

PREFACE

Giving some ACCOUNT of the AUTHOR, and of this WORK.

THE Name of this Author hath been so illustrious in these Western parts of the World, that as there are few persons who read Books to whom it is not known; so there needs no more to recommend this Work, and procure it entertainment, with all those that have heard of him. In which he hath faithfully laid out those great Talents of reason and learning, wherewith God blessed him above most other Men, in the defence of his most holy Religion. *Which he hath served very much in other works of his; but in none more than this: because it is of such General use, and so satisfactory, that it may alone merit those titles of honour, which the Men of learning have bestowed on him; though they be as high, as well can be devised.*

There

There is nothing more ordinary in our Selden, *than* vir Maximus, vir ſummus, *the greateſt, the chief of Men; when he ſpeaks of* Grotius. *Upon whom* Salmaſius *beſtows the Title of* ἐξοχώτατος, *moſt excellent; and as if he were in a rapture when he thought of him, cries out,* ὦ θαυμασιώτατε, O moſt admirable, or wonderful, *and* ſupereminentiſſime, *moſt ſupereminent* Grotius! *to whom he wiſhed much rather to be like, than to be the moſt eminent perſon, for riches and honour, in the whole World. I ſhall only add the character, which* Baudius *gave of him very early,* 1612. *in a* Scazon *he made upon him; where he thus admires him.*

Vir magne, vir mirande, vir ſine exemplo.

In Engliſh,

O thou great Man, thou wonderful Man,
A Man without example.

Yet as great a Man as he was, he fell into diſgrace in his own Countrey, and was thrown into Priſon (every body knows) in the Caſtle of Lupſtein. *In which ſtrict confinement he meditated many profitable Works, eſpecially in things Sacred. For, during his long Impriſonment, he found by a happy experience (as he*

he writes to Barlæus *a great while after*) *there was* a wonderful power in the holy Doctrines to support the mind, and to keep it erect against all calamities. *And therefore for his own solace, in the first place, (as he tells another Friend) he set himself to write this little Book: which he intimates both in the beginning and in the conclusion of it, was then composed, or rather hastily put together, when his Mind was more free than his Body. And therefore (when after several Editions he set it forth with Annotations,* 1640.*) he calls it in an Epistle to* Sarravius, Partum doloris quondam mei, *&c.* The child of my grief in time past; now a Monument of my Thanksgiving to God. *And as it was written originally in his own Language; so it was in Verse; that it might be more popular, and more easily committed to memory, by the rudest people: such as Mariners, for whom he chiefly intended it. He tells us as much in the Preface; but we may learn it more fully out of a Letter to him, on this subject, from* * Episcopius. *Who says, that the oftner he read over those* Rythmes, *the more he was rapt both into love, and admiration of them. There being nothing in them which was not most necessary to be known; and was able to incline the hardest heart to embrace this holy Religi-*

* Inter Epist. Præst. vir. p. 630.

Religion. For it was hard to determine, *he says*, whether the Majesty of the things, or the clearness and sweetness of the expressions were most to be commended: the Majesty of the matter not at all hindring the clearness of the Verse, nor its being tyed to Verse at all diluting or enervating the Majesty of the matter. *Such a strife there was between these two, with equal success; that it became a question, whether it was more divine to be able to have a solid and distinct conception in his mind of things so difficult and sublime; or, having conceived them, to cloath them in such comely and perspicuous words; that at the first glance every* Reader *understood his great sense, though bound up and fettered within the laws of verse.*

Which way I suppose he chose, because it was the ancient manner of delivering the most useful things; as he himself observes in his Prolegomena *to* Stobæus *his* Florilegium; *which was written not long after this Book. Where, as a proof of it, he alledges that of* Homer; *who says,* Clytemnestra, *did not incline to vice, till she had lost him, that was wont to sing to her. For precepts of wisdom so taught are exceeding charming to the minds of Youth; being not only more easily imprinted on the memory, but touching the affections more power-*

powerfully, and to the very quick, than when otherwise spoken at large. And therefore the publick Laws were in the most ancient times thus written, as Aristotle *informs us: and that true Religion might be more easily conveyed into Peoples minds, and fixed there,* Apolinarius *translated all the Books of* Moses (*as* Sozomen *tells us*, L. vi. *cap.* 18.) *and the rest of the History of the Bible, as far as the reign of* Saul, *into Heroick verse; in imitation of* Homer's *Poems,* Suidas *says, he put the whole Old Testament into such Verse; and it is not improbable, for what he did upon the* Psalms *is still remaining.*

If it were my present business, I could trace this way of Instruction down to our own times; and through our own Nation: in which it hath been very effectual, as the story of Aldelmus *sufficiently informs us. Who first brought in the composition of Latin verse among the* English, *a little before* Edward *the Confessors time; and by his excellent faculty in singing, wrought such wonderful effects upon the People, for the civilizing of their manners, and for their instruction in the duties of Religion: that* Lanfrank *by his own Authority, thought good to make him a Saint.*

The very same charms Grotius *hoped would have the same effect upon the rude Seamen of his*

his Country: into whom he desired by his Rymes, not only to instil a sense of piety; but to enable them to convey it to other Nations, with whom they traded. And it seems this work was so much famed, that it moved the curiosity of a great man in France *(into which* Grotius *went after his wonderful escape,* 1621. *out of that Prison, or rather Sepulchre, as he calls it in a Letter to a Friend, wherein it was first projected) to ask him very often, what the Contents of that Book were, which he had written in* Dutch, *upon this subject of Religion. Whom he satisfied, by translating the sense of it into the Latin Tongue, in the Year* 1628. *and addressing it unto that excellent Person, who made the inquiry,* viz. Hieronymus Bignonius. *Who together with* Grotius *and* Salmasius, *the famous Cardinal* Richlieu *(a notable Judge of Wits) was wont to say*, were the only Persons of thas Age, whom he lookt upon, as arrived to the highest pitch of Learning.*

* Epist. Cl. Sarravii. p. 146.

In which Translation, he tells Sarravius, *in a Letter to him that Year, he should find, if nothing else, that he had at least endeavoured* brevity with perspicuity. *Which made it so acceptable every where, though no longer in Verse, but now in Prose, that in the Year,* 1632. *I find (he tells* Cordesius *another Learned Man in* France*)

France*) *it was gone the* third *time to the Press; with some Additions. But not with so many, it seems, as some desired; for there were those who wished he would have answered a Book of* Bodins, *which seemed to impugn it. This he thought a needless pains,* for whatsoever it is, *saith he (in a Letter to the same person**) that seems to shake the foundations I have laid (upon which the Christian Faith relies) I have already obviated it; as far as is necessary to perswade a Reader that is not pertinacious. As for those Opinions, which are commonly received in Christianity, but without the exact knowledge of which, we may be Christians; they do not belong to my Argument.

* Epist. ad *Gallos*, p. 331. 417.

* Ib. pag. 407.

*In the same Year also (*1632*) I find it Translated here into the* English *Language. Which He himself afterwards takes notice of, in a Letter to* Gerrard Vossius, 1638*. *Where he tells him, that there were (beside the* English*) two* High-Dutch *Translations of this Book; one* French; *and that the* English *Embassador's Chaplain was turning it into* Greek; *and the* Romanists *themselves into the* Persian *Tongue: that by* God's *blessing it might convert the* Mahometans.

* Inter Epist. præstant. virorum, p. 748

None

None of these could see any Socinianism *(or other dangerous heresie) in it; which some of the duller sort of learned Men, were forward to charge it withal: because he doth not directly prove in this Book the Doctrine of the blessed Trinity. Of which he gives this account in the forenamed Letter;* 'that he heard a great Man (*who was* Franc. 'Junius, *as I take it*) *condemn* du Plessis, 'and others, *for endeavouring to prove that* 'Mystery *by reasons fetcht from Nature, and* 'by Platonical *Testimonies; (sometimes not* 'very pertinent) *which ought not to come into* 'a Disputation *with* Atheists, Pagans, Jews, 'and Mahometans: *who must all be first* 'drawn *to believe the Holy Scriptures; that* 'from thence *they may learn such things, as* cannot be known, *but by Divine Revelation.*

This was the Reason he medled not with the Doctrine of the Trinity *directly: But if any body doubted of his Orthodoxy in this Point, They might see (he tells him in another Letter) what his opinion was, in his* Poems *then newly come forth; and the larger explication of it he reserved to his* Notes.

And for the same cause he did not distinctly treat of some other things; particularly about the Divinity *of our Lord Jesus Christ,*

and

and his Satisfaction: *for which omission this Book was blamed, as* Sarravius *writes to him, by some who had nothing else to do, but to find fault with the labours of others. To which* Grotius *returned such an Answer, as not only gave him, he tells us, most full satisfaction, in those two Points; but enabled him to silence those accusers. He doth not intimate indeed what that reply was; but as to the former Point it is apparent from his Annotations, that he believed our Saviour to be indeed* God *of* God. *And that passage in the Conclusion of the* xxi Section *of the* fifth Book, *concerning the Messias being called in the Holy Scriptures by the Name of* God *and* Lord, *I should have translated thus*------ The Messias is called by that auguſt Name of God Jehovah, *and also of* Lord, viz. *ELOHIM and ADONAI. For so he explains himself, I have since taken notice, in his Annotations; and adds this observation, that the* Talmud *in* Taanith *says, that when the time shall come, spoken of* xxv. Isa. 8. 9. (i. e. *of the Messiah*) Jehovah shall be shewn, as we say, with the finger: *that is, Men shall be able to point others to him, saying, Lo there is* Jehovah.

And as for the other thing, it is possible his Answer might be to the same purpose with

what he writ to * Vossius. *In which he tells him, that if any one desired to know (as he had already signified in a Letter, to one that said he was accused of* Socinianism) *what his opinion was in the business of* Christ's *satisfaction, even since* Crellius *had written against him; it would appear plainly enough out of his Translation of the* LIII. *of* Isaiah, *in his Disputation against the* Jews: (*which you may find here in the* V. Book, Section 19.) *and from hence also that in the Conclusion of this Work of the* Truth of Christian Religion, *he doth not interpret those words,* i Hebr. 3. καθαρισμὸν ποιησάμενος *in the present tense,* making a purgation, *or* expiating our sins, *as* Socinus *doth; but in the past time* expiatis peccatis nostris, having expiated, *or* purged away our sins. *How they come to be otherwise Translated in his Annotations on that place, put forth since his death, I can give no account.*

* Epist. præstant. Viror. p. 747.

And in like manner, I suppose, he satisfied another doubt about a passage in this Book, which Sarravius *desired him to resolve; though I cannot find his Answer to it: For he gives a punctual Answer afterward to a Question propounded by a Minister of* Rouen; *who*

who askt him, where he had that of Rabbi Nechumias, *who made that publick Declaration (mentioned in the* Fifth Book, Sect. 14.) *concerning the appearing of Christ,* 50. *Years before our Saviour; to this effect:* That the time which *Daniel* had prefixed for the coming of the Messiah, could not be prolonged above those Fifty Years. *Which he tells* Sarravius * *is to to be found in the* Talmud, *in the Title* Sanhedrin *(as he remembred) and he thought also in* Abenada *upon* Daniel.

* Epist. Claud. *Sarrav.* p. 52.

This was in the Year 1640. *when he first put out this Book with* Annotations; *containing the Testimonies of those Authors, in words at length; whom he had alledged: but had forgotten, it seems, to set down where he had this passage of Rabbi* Nechumias. *Nor is it now to be found among the Annotations; and therefore they that next Print the Book so inlarged, will do well to supply it from hence, out of* Sarravius. *Who was the first Person * to whom he made a present of it after it came out, with the Addition of Testimonies: desiring to be admonished by him, if, in the midst of much business, any thing had escaped him,*

* Epist. ad *Gallos*, p. 460.

which was less exactly spoken; while he studied to serve the Christian cause.

To which he replies immediately, "*That* "*as he could not but esteem it, a very great* "*honour to be acknowledged and beloved by* "*the* Coryphæus *of all Learning, both Sa-* "*cred and Prophane; so he esteemed this* "*as a* Golden Book, *wherein* Grotius *had* "*joyned Learning together with Piety:* "*consulting, that is, the Disease of the Age;* "*to whose Palate, Piety (of it self) had* "*little savour. And, as for the immense* "*collection of Testimonies then added, he made* "*it appear by them, that in all his studies* "*the glory of Christ had alway been before* "*his eyes: his holy diligence and industry* "*having discovered so many, and such things,* "*which had escaped the sagacious eyes of* "*others.*

And not long after he propounded some doubts, according to his own desire; and mentioned some exceptions, (as was noted before) which some, who had no good will to him, took at this Golden Book, *as he again calls it: and notwithstanding the harsh censures of some* Learned Men, *this excellent Person still persisted in his high esteem of the worth of this Author; and believed*

believed all unprejudiced Men would ever look upon him with great Veneration. So he tells Salmasius, *Five Years after* * (1645) Whether they will or no, *Grotius* will alway be accounted a great Man, by you and me; and by all that love Equity and Goodness: for he is full of envy, who denies due praises to such an Hero. *And a little while after, hearing of the news of his death, he most sadly bewails it,* * *as the extinction of the bright Star of that Age; whose Name would be great as long as either Books or Learning were in honour. And while he had breath, he saith, he would glory in this, that he once had familiar acquaintance with a Man, who was* re & nomine Magnus, *no less great indeed than his Name imported.*

* Epist. *Claud. Sarrav.* p. 146.

* Ib. p. 171.

This affection he seems to have carried with him to his Grave, and honoured his Memory at such a rate, that in the Year 1648. *he still says, he was proud of the Friendship of that Man; by whom to have been known was glorious, and who would be reverenced in all future Ages. In conclusion he calls him* that Blessed Soul: *even after*

he himself had pronounced this sentence against Grotius *, that he favoured the Papists; and not only yielded too much to them in his later Writings; but expressed too much disaffection to the reformed in those Countries. All this he candidly passed over with this censure* *; He is the best Man who hath fewest faults; for there is no body to be found without some.

* Ib. p. 196.

* Ib. p. 146.

And the same favourable judgment, I suppose, all serious and considering men, will pass upon him now; and not be hindred by any prejudices, which may have been taken up against him among our selves, from reaping that benefit which they may receive by reading this excellent Book. Which I present again to the view of the English *World, and have in a manner made a new Translation of it: the former, which came out near 50. Years ago, being so defective; that there were few Paragraphs in it, which stood not in need of some amendment, and in a great number the sense was quite mistaken.*

Who the Translator was, I am ignorant; but it is certain, he either did not under-

stand

ſtand the Latin *Tongue, or did not attend to what he was about, as appears by innumerable Inſtances. But one may ſuffice, in the* Third Book, Sect. 3. *where he Tranſlates* altera Petri, *the one Epiſtle of* Peter. *Beſides there is plain* Arianiſm *in his Tranſlation,* (Book V. Sect. 21.) *for he ſays the Son was not uncreate as the Father is; when in* Grotius *the words are, the Son is not* ingenitus *unbegotten as the Father is.*

Yet where the Tranſlation was paſſable, I have let it go as it was; that I might not ſeem to be too curious a Cenſurer of other Mens labours. And I have added ſuch paſſages as were not there; the Book it ſelf having been inlarged by Grotius, *ſince that old* Engliſh *Tranſlation. I know not how neceſſary it might be at that time, when it was firſt put into our Language; but now I think nothing can be more: And to make it of larger uſe, I have added alſo a* Seventh Book *of my own. In which, out of thoſe Principles chiefly, which* Grotius *builds upon in his* Six Books, *I have ſhewn that* Chriſtian Religion *hath ſuffered very much by the Church of of* Rome; *and that we need not go thither to be aſſured of the* Truth *of that Religion: but ſhall be better informed in our own Church by the Holy Scriptures, and ſuch works as theſe.*

I have not quoted all my Authors, no more than Grotius *did in the first Editions of his Book. And it would have made the Work also too long (I thought) to Translate his Testimonies, and add the like of my own. Nor would it have been so useful to common Readers; who do but perplex themselves in abundance of quotations, and must, after all, believe that we report them truly: and therefore may as well believe us when we say; that they are ready at hand to attest every thing, which is here affirmed from their Authority.*

Since the finishing of this little Labour, I was informed by a Friend, that Mr. Clement Barksdale *had translated part of this Work into* English, *and upon search, I found the three first Books among some other Discourses, Printed* 1669. *And I am told further by another Friend, that he hath lately added (though I have not seen it) the three last Books. Which if I had known sooner, it might have saved me, I believe, most, if not all, of the pains I have taken. But I was perfectly ignorant of it; as I perceive he was of any former Translation, before his. For in that Edition of his Discourses, where he hath added the*

Third

Third *Book of this Work, concerning the* Authority of the Scriptures, *he ſaith, it had not been till then in* Engliſh.

But it will do no hurt; though the ſame good thing be reached out to us, by more hands than one: and ſo I leave it to Gods Bleſſing, upon the Readers ſerious peruſal.

S. P.

A

CHRISTIAN PRAYER

FOR THE

Adversaries of True Religion.

O Merciful God, who hast made all Men, and hatest nothing that thou hast made, nor wouldest the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live; Have mercy upon all *Jews*, *Turks*, *Infidels* and Hereticks, and take from them all ignorance, hardness of heart, and contempt of thy Word: And so fetch them home, blessed Lord, to thy Flock, that they may be saved among the remnant of the true *Israelites*, and be made one Fold under one Shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord; who liveth and reigneth with Thee, and the Holy Spirit, one God, World without end.

Amen.

To

To the Honourable

Hieronymus Bignonius,

The KING'S Advocate in the Supreme Court of *PARIS.*

SIR,

YOU are wont very often to ask me, who am sensible how highly you have deserved of your Country, of learning, and (if you will permit me to add that) of me also; what the Argument of those Books is, which I wrote in my own Country Language, in the behalf of Christian Religion. Nor do I wonder you should make such a question; for you who have read, and that with so great judgment, all that is worth the reading; cannot be ignorant, what pains hath been already taken in this matter: by Raymundus Sebundus, *with Philosophical subtilty; by* Ludovicus Vives, *with variety of Dialogues; but especially by your* Mornay, *with no less Learning than Eloquence. For which cause it may seem more profitable to translate some of them, into the vulgar Tongue; than to begin a new Work upon this subject.*

But what other men will judge of this matter I know not; my hope is that before you, Sir, *who*

are

are so fair and easie a Judge, I may be absolved, if I say; that having read not only those Authors, but what the Jews *have written for the old Judaical, and Christians for our Religion; I thought good also to use my own judgment, such as it is, and to allow that freedom to my mind, which, when I wrote it, was denied to my body. For I thought that Truth was not to be contended for, but only with truth; and with such truth also as I approved in my own mind: knowing it would be but a vain labour to go about to perswade others of that, which I had not first perswaded my self to believe.*

Omitting therefore such arguments, as seem'd to me to have little weight in them; and the authority of such Books, as I either knew or suspected to be counterfeit; I selected those, both out of the ancient and modern times, which appeared to me to have the greatest force in them. And what things I fully assented unto, those I both cast into an orderly method, and expressed in as popular a manner as I could invent; and likewise included in verse, that they might be the better committed to memory.

For my intention was to do some good service hereby to all my Countrey-men; especially to seafaring men: that in their long Voyages, wherein they have nothing to do, they might lay out their time and imploy it; rather than, as too many do, lose and misspend it.

Where-

Wherefore, taking my rise from the commendation of our Nation, which for diligent skill in Navigation much excels the rest, I stir'd them up to use this Art, as a Divine benefit: not meerly for their own gain, but for the propagation of the true, that is, the Christian Religion. For they would neither want matter for such endeavours, when in their long Voyages they commonly met, either with Pagans, as in China *and* Guinea; *or with* Mahometans, *as under the* Turkish *Empire, the* Persian *and the* Africans; *or with* Jews, *who as they are now profest enemies of Christians, so are dispersed through the greatest part of the World: and there would always be store of impious men, who are ready upon occasion to vent the Poison, which for fear they keep concealed. Against which mischiefs I wisht that our Countrey-men might be sufficiently armed: and that they who are more ingenious than others, would use their utmost endeavours to confute Errours; and the rest would at least be so cautious, as not to be overcome by them.*

And that I might shew Religion is no frivolous thing, I begin, in the first Book, at the ground or foundation thereof; which is, that there is a God. *Now that I attempt to prove after this manner.*

The

The First Book OF THE TRUTH OF Christian Religion.

SECT. I.

That there is a GOD.

THat there are ſome things which had a *beginning*, is clear to common ſenſe, and by the confeſſion of all: howbeit thoſe things were not cauſes to themſelves of their own being. For that which is not cannot produce any thing, neither had it power to be before it was; therefore it follows, that the ſaid things had their beginning from ſome other thing different from themſelves: Which may be averred not only of ſuch things as now we ſee, or ever have beheld, but of ſuch alſo as gave original unto theſe, and ſo upward until we come to ſome *prime cauſe* which never began to be, and which

(as we say) hath its existence *by necessity*, and not after any *contingent* manner: And this, what ever it be, (whereof by and by we shall speak) is *that* which is meant by *Divine Power or Godhead.*

Another reason to prove that *there is some such divine Majesty*, is taken from the most manifest consent of all Nations, such I mean as have not utterly lost the light of reason and good manners; and become altogether wild and savage. For since those things which proceed from Mans pleasure and appointment, are neither the same among all Men, and are often subject to change; and yet there is no place where this notion is not found, and it is not changed by the alterations of times (as *Aristotle* himself notes, who was not over credulous in such matters) we must assign some cause of it, that extends it self to all Mankind. Which can be no other, than either an Oracle of God himself, or a Tradition derived from the first Parents of Mankind. The former of which if we admit, the thing in question is granted; and if we affirm the latter, there can no good reason be given, why we should believe those first Parents did deliver a falshood, to all their Posterity, in a matter of the greatest moment.

Moreover, whether we consider those *parts of the World* which were anciently known, or those that are lately found out, whersoever there is (as we have said) any *reliques* of humanity, there certainly is *this truth* acknowledged, as well by such *Heathens* as have any ingenuity and wisdom, as also by those that are of a more dull and stupid dispos-

disposition: The former whereof questionless could not all be deceived; neither is it likely that these later so silly and simple should any way devise how to *deceive* one another.

Neither let any Man here object, that there have been some in many Ages, who have either believed there is no God; or professed they did not believe it: For both the small number of them, and the Universal rejection of their opinion, as soon as their Arguments were understood; make it appear, that it did not proceed from the use of right reason, which is common to all Men; but either from the affectation of novelty (such as was in him that would needs maintain the Snow to be black) or from a corrupt mind, like as Meats to a distempered Palate, taste quite otherwise than indeed they are. Especially since both History and other Writings teach us, that the honester any man was, the more diligently did he preserve the knowledge of God. And further, that this departure from so anciently a received opinion, chiefly proceeds from the naughty disposition of those, whose interest it is that there should be no God; that is, no Judge of humane actions, appears even from hence: that whatsoever they put in the room thereof: whether a succession of several kinds of things, without any beginning; or a concourse of atomes; or any thing else whatsoever; it hath not less, if not greater, difficulties, nor is at all more credible (as is manifest to any Man, that vouchsafes an ordinary attention to the matter) than that opinion which is already received.

As for that which some pretend, that they cannot believe there is a God, because they cannot

see him; if they see any thing, they cannot but see how unworthy this thought is of a Man, who doth but believe that he hath a mind, which he never saw, no more than he doth the essence of God. Nor because we cannot comprehend the Nature of God by our understanding, ought we therefore to deny there is any such Nature: for this is proper to every inferiour creature, not to be able to comprehend those Beings which are superiour, and more excellent than it self. The Beasts cannot conceive what Man is, much less can they know after what manner Men institute and govern Common-wealths, measure the Stars, and sail upon the Sea; for all these things are out of their reach. From which very thing, Man, who is raised, and that not of himself, by the nobility of his nature, above the Beasts, ought to infer; that that Being by whom he is made superiour to Beasts, is no less superiour to him, than he himself to the Beasts; and that therefore there is some Nature, which, as far more excellent, transcends his comprehension.

SECT. II.

That there is but One GOD.

WE having evinced that *there is a God*, it follows that we speak of his Attributes. The first whereof is this, that *there are not more Gods, but one God.* This is gathered from hence, that God (as was said before) is what He is necessarily, and of Himself. Now whatsoever is necessarily, or of it self, is considered not in its gene-

general notion, but as actually in being. Now things actually in being are particular. But if you suppose more Gods, you cannot find a reason in each of them, why they should necessarily be; nor why two rather than three, or ten rather than five should be believed.

Besides, the multiplication of those particular things that are of the same nature, proceeds from the *exuberancy* and fruitfulness of the *causes* whence such things more or less are generated: but of *God* there is neither beginning nor any *cause*.

Furthermore, in all particular things, there are certain special and particular *properties* whereby the same things are severally distinguished: now to make such a distinction in *God*, is altogether needless, since that he is *most necessary and simple* by nature. Neither can any Man perceive any signs or tokens of the *plurality of Gods*. For this *universal Sphere* or circumference which we behold, makes up but one compleat World, wherein there is one most beautiful and glorious *Sun*: Likewise in every Man, the little world, there is but one special governing part, to wit, *his soul or mind*. Besides, if we should suppose two Gods, or more, freely acting and willing, what they please, they might will contrary things; and then one of them might be hindred by the other, from effecting what he had a mind to have done. But to say that God can be hindred in what He designs, is unworthy of his Majesty.

SECT. III.

That all Perfection is in GOD.

THat we may know the reſt of God's Attributes, let it be conſidered; that whatſoever is wont to be underſtood by the Name of *Perfection* (which word we muſt be content to uſe, ſince our Language furniſhes us with no better, to expreſs the Greek Τελειότης) is in God, may be thus proved. What perfection ſoever there is in things, it either had a beginning; or had no beginning. That which had no beginning, is the perfection of God: and that which had a beginning, of neceſſity muſt have ſomething, that gave it ſuch beginning. And ſince nothing among all the things that have a being, is made of nothing; it follows that thoſe perfections which appear to be in any effects were the reaſon why *the cauſe* thereof could produce any thing accordingly; and conſequently are all in the *firſt cauſe*. Neither muſt it be here imagined, that the *firſt cauſe* can afterward be deprived of its *perfection*; either by ſome other thing different from it ſelf, becauſe that which is eternal hath no dependance upon any other thing, neither can be liable and ſubject unto their actions; or of it ſelf, becauſe every Nature deſires its own perfection.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

GOD is infinite.

AND we may add further, that these *perfections* which are in *God*, are in him after an eminent and *infinite* manner; for the nature of every thing is finite and limited, either for that the cause whence it proceeded hath communicated such a measure or degree of *existence*, and no more thereunto, or for that the same nature was not capable of any further *perfection*; Now there is no nature that doth communicate any thing of its own unto *God*, neither is he capable of ought that any other thing can impart; being (as before we said) altogether absolute, and *necessary* of himself.

SECT. V.

That GOD is eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, and absolutely good.

AGain, foraſmuch as all things that have *life*, are said to be more *perfect* than those without *life*; and those which have power of acting, than those which want it; and those endued with *understanding* superiour to such creatures as lack it; and those which are *good*, better than those that come short in *goodness*; it followeth from that which hath been spoken, that *all those attributes* are in *God*, and that after an *in-*

finite manner. Therefore is he *infinite* in life, that is, *eternal*; *infinite* power, that is, *omnipotent*; So likewise is he *omniscient*, and altogether good without any exception.

SECT. VI.

That GOD is the Author and cause of all things.

FUrthermore, it follows from that which hath been spoken, that what things soever *subsist*, the same have the *original* of their *being from God:* for we have proved that that which is *necessary* of it self, can be but *one*; whence we collect that all other things besides this had their *original* from somewhat different from themselves.

Now such things as have their *beginning* from another, we have seen before how that either in themselves or in their causes, they proceeded from *him* which had no beginning, that is, *from God.*

Neither is this manifest by *reason* only, but also after some sort by very sense: for if we consider the wonderful frame and fashion of *Man's body*, both within and without, and how that each part and parcel thereof hath its *proper use* without the study or industry of his Parents, and yet with such art that the most accomplished Philosophers and Physicians could never sufficiently admire it; this verily shews the Author of Nature to be a most excellent Mind: concerning which matter *Galen* hath written well, especially where he speaks of the use of the *eye*, and of the *hand.*

hand. Yea more, the very bodies of mute *beasts* do testifie the same: for their *parts* are not framed and composed by the power and vertue of the matter whereof they consist, but by some superiour and higher cause destinating them to a certain end.

Neither is this plain by *man* and *beasts* alone, but also by *plants* and *herbs*, as hath accurately been observed by some *Philosophers.* This further is excellently noted by *Strabo*, concerning the *situation* of the waters, which, if we consider the quality of their matter, ought to be placed in the *middle* between the earth and the air, whereas they are now included and dispersed within the earth, to the end they might be no hinderance, either to the fruitfulness of the ground, or to the life of Man. Now to propose *that*, or any other *end*, to any action, is the peculiar property of an *understanding nature.* Neither are all things only ordained for their peculiar *ends*, but also for the good and benefit of the whole *Universe*, as appears particularly in the water but now mentioned, which against its own proper nature is moved upward, lest by the interposition of a vacuity there should be a gap in the Universe: which is so framed, that by the continued cohesion of its parts, it sustains and upholds it self. Now it cannot possibly be, that this common end should be thus intended, together with an inclination in things thereunto, but by the power and purpose of some *intelligent nature*, whereunto the whole *Universe* is in subjection. Moreover amongst the beasts there are certain actions observed to be so regular and orderly done, that it is manifest enough they proceed from some kind of *reason*; as is plain in *Pismires*

and

and especially in *Bees*, and likewise in other creatures, which before they make any trial do naturally eschew such things as are hurtful, and seek after such things as are profitable for them. Now that this instinct or inclination of finding and judging things, is not in them by their own power, it is clear; for that they do always operate after the same manner, neither have they any vertue or efficacy at all to the doing other things which are no more weighty: wherefore they must needs receive their power from some *reasonable external Agent*, which directs them or imprints in them such efficacy as they have, and this *reasonable* and *intelligent Agent*, is no other than God himself.

In the next place consider we the *Stars* of Heaven, and amongst the rest, as most eminent, the *Sun* and the *Moon*, both which for the making the earth fruitful, and preserving living Creatures in their health and vigour, do so seasonably perform their course of motion, that a better cannot be devised. For when otherwise their motion through the Æquator had been much more simple, we see that they have another motion by an *oblique Circle*, to the end, the benefit of their favourable aspects might be communicated to more parts of the earth.

Now as the earth is ordained for the use and benefit of living Creatures, so are all terrestrial things appointed chiefly for the service of man, who by his wit and reason can subdue the most furious creature among them; whence the very *Stoicks* did collect, that the World was made for Man's sake.

Howbeit, since it exceeds the sphere of humane power, to bring the heavenly bodies in sub-

jection

jection to him; neither is it to be imagined that they will ever submit themselves to man of their own accord; it follows therefore that there is some *superiour mind* or *spirit*, by whose sole appointment those fair and glorious bodies do perpetual service unto man, though he be placed far below them; which *same mind* is no other than the framer of the stars, even the *Maker* of the whole World. Also the motions of these stars which are said to be Excentrical and Epicyclical (*i. e.* in a Circle within the Orb of another Star) do plainly shew, not the power of matter, but the appointment of a free Agent. The same do the Positions of the Stars testifie, some in this part, others in the other part of Heaven: together with the so unequal form of the Earth, and of the Seas. Nor can we refer it to any thing else, that the Stars move this, rather than another way. The most perfect form also and figure of the World, *viz.* roundness; as also the parts thereof, shut up as it were in the bosom of the Heavens, and disposed with a marvellous order, do all expresly declare, that they were not tumbled together, or conjoyned as they are, *by chance*, but wisely ordained by *such an understanding* as is endued with super-eminent excellency. For what Ninny is there so sottish, as to expect any thing so accurate and exact from chance? He might as well believe that Stones and Timber got casually together, and put themselves into the form of a House: or that out of Letters shuffled carelesly as it hapned, there came forth an excellent Poem. A thing so unlikely, that even a few *Geometrical figures* espied on the *Sea-shore*, gave the beholder just ground to argue, that some *man* had been there; it being evident enough

enough that such things could not proceed from *meer chance.*

Furthermore, that *Mankind* was not from all Eternity, but at a certain time had a *common beginning*, may be manifested among other things from the progress of *Arts* and *Sciences*; yea, by the *very ground* whereupon we tread, which was anciently rude and untill'd, but afterward became possessed with Inhabitants: which also *the Language* spoken in *Islands*, derived from adjacent Countries, doth witness. The same is apparent by *certain ordinances*, so generally received amongst Men, that the *institution* thereof may not be thought to have proceeded so much from the *instinct of nature*, or *evident deductions of reason*, as from *perpetual* and *constant tradition*, scarce interrupted in a few places, either by the *malice* or *misery* of Man: such was that of killing Beasts in Sacrifice, used in former times; and such also are now the modesty and shamefac'dness about venereal things, the solemnities of Marriages, and the abhorrence of all incestuous Embraces.

SECT. VII.

Answer to that Objection concerning the cause of evil.

* NEither ought we to doubt of that which hath been spoken, because we see *many evil things come to pass*; the source and cause whereof cannot be ascribed unto God, who (as before hath been shewn) is *good*, after the most perfect

perfect and absolute degree of *Goodness*. For when we said that *God* was the author and cause of all things, we addded withal that he was the cause of such things as *really do subsist*: And no absurdity (that I see) will follow, if we affirm that those things which have true and real existence, are the causes of some certain accidents, as namely of actions, or the like. The Almighty (we know) created both Man, and those more sublime Minds, the Angels, endued with *liberty of action*; which *liberty* in it self is not sinful, yet by its *power* some sins may be committed. Now to make *God* the *author* of these evils, which are morally evil, is no better than *blasphemy*: howbeit there are other kind of *evils*, so called because they afflict some person with *grief* or *loss*, and these we may affirm to be inflicted by *God* for the reformation and amendment of some sinner, or for punishment answerable to an offence, which to say is no impiety, since that such *evils* have nothing in them contrary to *goodness*, but rather they proceed from *goodness it self*; like a bitter *potion* from a good *Physician*.

SECT. VIII.

Against the Opinion of two Principles or causes of things.

HEre by the way, it may be noted, that the opinion of those Men is to be abandoned and avoided, which make *two efficient causes*, the one *good*, and the other *evil*: for from two Principles opposite to each other, there may follow the

the ruine and destruction, but in no wise a well ordered composition of things. Neither is this to pass for truth, to wit, that as there is something *good* of it self, so likewise there must needs be something absolutely *evil* in it self; seeing that *evil* is a certain *defect*, which cannot be but in a thing that hath *existence*, which very having of *existence*, or being is *good*.

SECT. IX.

That GOD doth govern the whole World.

MOreover that this whole *Universe* is governed by the *providence of God*, is evident, for that not only *men*, which have right reason and understanding, but also the *fowles*, and *beasts* both wild and tame, which have in them some thing correspondent to reason, do bear a *kind* of providence, or *respectful care* over the *issue* which they bring forth. Which *perfection*. since it is a part of goodness, must needs be attributed to *God*; and so much the rather, because he is both *omniscient* and *omnipotent*, so that he can no way be ignorant of such things as are done, or to be done; and can easily direct and order *the same* as he pleaseth. To which also belongs that which we have spoken before, concerning the *moving* of things contrary to their proper nature, to serve an Universal end.

SECT.

SECT. X.

Yea, Sublunary things.

AND that they are much out of the way, who shut up this providence within the celestial Orbs, and would have it descend no lower than the Moon, is apparent; both from the reason now mentioned, whose force extends to all created things; and also from hence, that the course of the Stars, as the best Philosophers acknowledge, and experience sufficiently demonstrates, are ordained for the use of Man. Now it stands but with equity that that Creature should be *more regarded* for whose sake another is ordained, than that which is appointed for anothers use.

Neither are *they* less erroneous that say this *providence* is extended unto *universal* things only, and not to *particulars*; for if they will have *God* to be ignorant of particular things, as some of them have professed, then verily *God* could not understand himself; neither should he be infinite in knowledge, as we have proved him before to be, if it be not extended unto every thing. But then, if *God* do know these things, why can he not also have care of them? especially since that particulars, as they are particulars, are appointed for some certain end, both special and general: And the *common effences* of things, which by the confession of the said Authors are preserved by *God*, cannot subsist but in their *singulars*; So that if these *singulars*, being forsaken by *Divine Providence*, may perish, then may the whole kinds likewise.

SECT.

SECT. XI.

This is further proved by the preservation of Empires.

ANother forcible Argument of *Divine providence* particularly over humane affairs, both Philosophers and Historians acknowledge in the *preservation of Commonwealths:* first in *general*, for that whereſoever the courſe and order of ruling and obeying is once admitted, the ſame always continues there: Then alſo, oftentimes in *particular*; it is evident by the long continuation of this or that very form of government thorow many ages, as of a *Monarchy* with the *Aſſyrians*, *Ægyptians*, and *Franks*; of an *Ariſtocracy* with the *Venetians*, and the like. For although Man's wiſdom and policy have ſome ſtroke in point of government; yet if we rightly conſider the multitude of wicked men, and the harms that may proceed from without, and the changes that are naturally incident to humane affairs, it may ſeem impoſſible for any State ſo long to ſubſiſt, unleſs it were upheld by a *conſtant particular care*, and by the *power of a Divine hand*. Which is more evidently ſeen, when it pleaſes God to change Empires, and tranſlate them from one to another. For to thoſe Inſtruments, whom he thinks good to uſe in that buſineſs, as a thing deſtined by himſelf (ſuppoſe *Cyrus*, *Alexander*, *Cæſar* the Dictator, *Cingi* among the *Tartars*, *Namcaa* among the *Chineſes*) all things whatſoever, even thoſe which do not depend on humane prudence, ſucceed more proſperouſly

sperously, beyond their own wishes, that is suitable to the usual variety in humane casualties. Which strange correspondence, and combination, or conspiring, as we may call it, of events to a certain end, is a manifest token of a provident direction. Like as at Dice, if a Man now and then throw a lucky cast, which wins all, it may be no more than a chance: but if he throw the very same an hundred times, there is no body, who will not conclude, that this proceeds from some extraordinary Art.

SECT. XII.

And by Miracles.

ANother most certain proof of *God's providence*, may be taken from those *miracles* and *prophecies* which are recorded in Histories: Where though many fabulous things be related in that kind, yet those that are testified by sufficient Witnesses living in the time when they came to pass; such I mean as were defective neither in judgment nor in honesty, are not to be despised as altogether impossible. For in as much as *God* is both *omnipotent* and *omniscient*, what can hinder him from signifying what he knows, or what he pleaseth to do; and that even beyond the common course of nature, which being made and ordained by him, becomes subject unto him by the title of creation? Now if any do object that such things might have been done by subordinate powers and *minds* inferiour to *God*; to them we answer, that so much may be granted

indeed: but yet this makes way, that the same may the more easily be credited of *God*, who is to be thought either to work by the mediation of those *Agents*, or else out of his wisdom to permit them when they bring to pass any such thing. For in well ordered Kingdoms there is nothing done against the Statutes and common Laws but by the arbitrement or permission of the *Supreme Governours*.

SECT. XIII.

Specially among the Jews, *whereunto credit may be given by reason of the long continuance of their Religion.*

NOW that there have indeed been some *miracles* seen, though the credit of other Histories should be questionable, yet it is manifest enough in the *Jewish Religion*: which albeit, it hath long been destitute of all humane helps, yea, exposed to contempt and scorn; yet for all that, hath still continued almost in all the climates and parts of the World even unto this day; whereas all other *Religions* (saving the Christian, which is the perfection, as it were, of the *Jewish*) have either vanished, as soon as the Imperial Power and Authority was withdrawn whereby they were supported, as all the *Paganish*: or else are still perpetually upheld by the same power and authority, as *Mahumetanism*. Now if it be demanded why the Jewish Religion hath taken such deep root in the hearts of the *Hebrews*, as that it cannot

cannot thence be eradicated? no better reason can be given or conceived than this; namely, that those *Jews* that are now alive did from their Parents, as those Parents from their Progenitors, and so upward until the times of *Moses* and *Joshua*, receive those miracles mentioned in Scripture, *by certain and constant Tradition*, which *miracles* were done chiefly at the departing out of *Ægypt*, and in their journey through the Wilderness, and entrance into the Land of *Canaan*, whereof their Ancestors were then eye-witnesses. Nor is it at all credible, that it could otherwise have come to pass, that a people who were sufficiently stiff-necked, and of a stubborn disposition, should take upon them a Law burdened with so many Rites; or that wise Men out of the many marks of Religion, which humane reason could have invented, should chuse Circumcision: which could not be received without very great pain; nor retained without the derision of all strangers; and had nothing in it to recommend it, save only this; that God was its Author.

SECT. XIV.

Also by the truth and antiquity of Moses *his Story.*

BEsides, *The writings of Moses*, wherein those *miracles* are recorded to posterity, do gain the greatest credit *thereunto*, not only because it was always a setled opinion and constant report amongst the *Hebrews*, that this same *Moses*

was commended by the *Oracle of God* to be a Leader of the People, but alſo becauſe it is manifeſt enough, that he neither affected his own glory, nor deſired their riches; foraſmuch as himſelf reveals his own faults and delinquencies, which he might have concealed; and alſo he aſſigned the dignity of his Kingdom and Prieſthood unto ſtrangers, whence his own Poſterity was brought to the common condition of *Levites*. By all which it appears, that he had no reaſon to forge untruths; Neither doth he uſe any diſſembling or alluring language, ſuch as commonly colours over a lye, but he ſpeaks after a plain ingenuous manner, according to the quality of the thing he treats of.

Add hereunto the undoubted *antiquity* of the Books of *Moſes*, to which no other writings are therein comparable: An argument whereof is, for that the *Grecians* (from whom all kinds of learning were derived to other Heathens) do confeſs they received their very Letters from others; which Letters of theirs have no other order, or name, or ancient form than that of the Syriac or Hebrew Tongue: as alſo for that the moſt ancient *Grecian Laws*, whence the *Romans* collected theirs, had their Original from the Laws of *Moſes*.

SECT.

SECT. XV.

And by the Testimony of many Gentiles.

MOreover besides these, there are many testimonies of such as were aliens from the *Jewish Religion*, which declare that the most ancient reports which passed for truth among all Nations, were agreeable to what *Moses* hath related in his Writings. Thus what things he related concerning the beginning of the World, the same are found also recorded in the most ancient Histories of the *Phœnicians*, which are collected by *Sancuniathon*, and translated by *Philo Biblius*; and partly also found amongst the *Indians* and *Ægyptians*: Hence it is that in *Linus*, *Hesiod*, and many of the *Grecians*, mention is made of a *Chaos*, which some have intimated by the name of an Egg: also of the making of living creatures, and last of all of Man according to a *Divine Image*; and of Man's dominion over other creatures; all which may be read in sundry Authors, and at last in *Ovid*, who transcribed them out of the *Greek* Writers. That all things were made by the *Word of God*, was confessed even by *Epicharmus* and the *Platonicks*, and before them by a most ancient Writer (not of those Hymns, which now go under that name, but) of those Verses which antiquity called *Orphean verses*; not because they had *Orpheus* for their Author, but because they summarily comprised his Doctrine. *Empedocles* acknowledged that the Sun was not the *primitive light*, but a fit *receptacle* of light. *Aratus* and *Catullus* think that above the sphere

or orb of the Stars there is a Divine habitation, wherein *Homer* imagined there was perpetual light.

That of all things *God* was the most ancient, because not begotten; the World most beautiful, because the work of GOD: and that darkness was before the light, were all the doctrines of *Thales* out of the ancient Learning. The last point whereof is found in *Orpheus* and *Hesiod*; whereupon the *Gentiles* that are commonly superstitious in following old fashions and customs, do number their particular times by *nights*, not by days. It was the opinion of *Athenagoras* that all things were ordered and disposed by the *highest intelligence*; of *Aratus*, that the Stars were made by *God*; and after the *Grecians*, of *Virgil*, that life was infused into things by the *Spirit of God*: and that Man was formed of *Clay*, is delivered by *Hesiod*, *Homer*, and *Callimachus*: Lastly, *Maximus Tyrius* affirms, that by the common consent of Nations, it is agreed, there is but one Supreme *God*, which is the cause of all things. And the memory of the finishing the Creation in seven days space, was preserved, not only among the *Greeks* and *Italians*, by the honour they gave to the *Seventh* day (as we learn out of *Josephus*, *Philo*, *Tibullus*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, and *Lucian*) but among the *Gauls* and *Indians*, who all distinguished their time, by Weeks, i. e. *seven days*; as we are taught by *Philostratus*, *Dion Cassius*, *Justin Martyr*; and the most ancient Names of the days of the Week.

Moreover, the *Ægyptians* taught, that Man at the beginning led his life in all simplicity, being *naked* in his body, and not ashamed; whence came *the Poets fiction of the golden age*, which was

was famous even amongst the *Indians*, as *Strabo* relates: The History of *Adam* and *Eve*, the *Tree*, the *Serpent*, was extant, as *Maimonides* tells us, among the Idolatrous *Indians* in his time: And that the same is found among the Pagans of *Pegu*, and the *Philippin* Islands, People of the same *India*, the name of *Adam* also among the *Brachmans*, and the account of 6000. Years being passed since the World was made, among those of *Siam*; we have Witnesses of our own age which assure us.

And that the lives of those who succeeded the first Men, were prolonged to near a Thousand Years, is reported by *Berosus* in his *Chaldaicks*, *Manethos* in his *Ægypticks*, *Hieromus* in his *Phœnician* records, *Hestiæus*, *Hecataus*, *Hellanicus* in the account they have left of the *Græcian* affairs, and among the Poets by *Hesiod*. Which is the less incredible, when we consider, what is reported in the Histories of very many Nations (particularly by *Pausanius*, and *Philostratus* among the *Greeks*, and *Pliny* among the *Romans*) the bodies of Men were anciently far larger than they are now; as was found upon the opening of some of their Sepulchres.

Catullus also, after very many *Greeks*, reports, that *heavenly visions* appeared unto Men before such time, as they by the multitude and heinousness of their crimes did deprive themselves of that sacred acquaintance and familiarity with *God*, and his ministring Spirits. The wild life of the *Gyants* which *Moses* mentions, may be read almost every where in the *Greek*, and in some *Latin* Authors. 'Tis to be noted of *Noah*'s Flood, that in its History the memory of almost all Nations ends; even of such Nations as were un-

known till of late years: whereupon *Varro* called all the ſpace before, the hid or unknown time. But thoſe things we find wrapt up in the licentious fables of the *Poets*, are truly, that is agreeable to *Moſes*, delivered by moſt ancient Writers, ſuch are *Beroſus* of the *Chaldees*, *Abydenus* of the *Aſſyrians*, who mentions the ſending out of a Dove; as alſo *Plutarch* of the *Grecians*; and *Lucian*, who ſaith, that at *Hieropolis* in *Syria*, there is to be ſeen a moſt ancient Hiſtory both of *Noah*'s Ark, and of thoſe that were ſaved therein, both Men and Beaſts: The ſame Hiſtory was extant alſo in *Molo*, and in *Nicolaus Damaſcenus*: the latter of which had alſo the Name of the Ark; which is found likewiſe in *Deucalion*'s Hiſtory in *Apollodorus*. To which we may add, that in ſeveral parts of *America*, as in *Cuba*, *Mechoacana*, *Nicuraga*, there hath been preſerved the memory of the Flood; of the Creatures ſaved from periſhing in it; yea, of the Raven and the Dove; and the memory of the Flood it ſelf, even in that part now called the *Golden Caſtile*, is witneſſed by very many of the *Spaniſh* Nation.

In what part of the World men lived before the Flood, that note in *Pliny* of the building of *Joppe* before the ſame Flood doth teſtifie. That the place whereon *Noah*'s Ark reſted after the Flood was in the *Gordien Mountains*, it is manifeſt by the conſtant remembrance thereof with the *Armenians* from all Ages until this time. *Japhet* the Father of the *Europians*, whence came *Ion*, or as anciently they pronounced the word *Iavon* of the *Grecians*, and *Hammo* of the *Afritans*, and ſuch like, are names which are found in *Moſes* his writings; as there are alſo foot-

ſteps

steps of the rest, in the names of Nations and Countreys, observed by *Josephus* and others. And then the endeavour of climbing up to Heaven, which of the Poets doth not mention? The burning of *Sodom* is spoken of by *Diodorus Siculus*, *Strabo*, *Tacitus*, *Pliny*, and *Solinus*. The most ancient use of *Circumcision* hath been related by *Herodotus*, *Diodorus*, *Strabo*, *Philo Biblius*; and now is retained by the posterity of *Abraham*, to wit, not only the *Hebrews*, but also the *Idumæans*, *Ismaëlites*, and others. A certain History of *Abraham*, *Isaac*, *Jacob*, and *Joseph*, agreeing with that of *Moses*, was anciently extant in *Philo Biblius* out of *Sanchuniath*: in *Berosus*, *Hecatæus*, *Damascenus*, *Atrapanus*, *Epolemus*, *Demetrius*, and partly in that old Author of the aforesaid *Orphean verses*; and now also there are some remainders thereof in *Justin*, out of *Trogus Pompæus*: And almost in every one of these Authors aforenamed, there is some mention made of *Moses* and his *Acts*: more particularly, how he was taken out of the Waters, and how the *two Tables* were given unto him of *God*, is plainly set down in those *Orphean verses* aforesaid. Add unto these the testimony of *Polemon*; also what some of the *Egyptians* themselves have recorded, to wit, *Manethon*, *Lisimachus*, and *Charimon*, concerning the departing out of *Egypt*.

Neither will it enter into the heart of any wise Man to think that *Moses*, (having so many enemies both of the *Egyptians*, and of other Nations, as the *Idumæans*, *Arabians*, and *Phœnicians*) would dare to divulge ought concerning the beginning of the World, and other ancient things, which either could be confuted by other more ancient Writings, or were repugnant to the com-

common received opinion in those times; neither doubtless would he publish any thing touching the affairs in that Age, which could be justly gainsaid or disproved by the testimonies of any then living. Of this *Moses* there is mention made by *Diodorus Siculus*, *Strabo*, and *Pliny*, by *Tacitus* also; and after all them, by *Dionysius Longinus* in his Book concerning sublimity of speech. Likewise *Jamnes* and *Mambres* that resisted *Moses* in *Egypt* are mentioned not only by the Authors of the *Talmud*, but by *Pliny* and *Apuleius*. Amongst others the *Pythagoreans* speak much of the Law it self, which was given by *Moses*, and of the Legal Rites. Both *Strabo* and *Justin* out of *Trogus* give an excellent testimony of the ancient *Jewish Religion* and *Justice*; insomuch that here (me thinks) 'tis needless to produce any further testimony of such things as are found, or have anciently been found consenting with the Books of the *Hebrews*, touching *Joshua* and others; seeing that whosoever gives credit unto *Moses*, (which to do no Man can without great impudency refuse,) the same must needs confess, that there were indeed wonderful Miracles anciently wrought by God, which is the thing we here chiefly go about to declare.

As for the Miracles of after Ages, suppose of *Elijah* and *Elisha*, and others, there is the less reason to think them counterfeit; because in those times *Judæa* was both more known than formerly; and upon the account of diversity of Religion, was extreamly hated by their Neighbours. Who might have very easily blasted the fame of such Miracles, if they had been lies, as soon as it began to be spread abroad. The History of *Jonah*, who lay three days in the Whale's belly,

belly, is to be read in *Lycophron*, and *Æneas Hazous*; save only that in stead of *Jonah*, they have put the name of *Hercules*: whom they so much honoured, that to make him appear the more illustrious, they were wont (as *Tacitus* and *Servius*, and others have noted) to report of him, whatsoever magnificent things they heard of in any other places.

Certain it is that *Julian*, who was an enemy of the *Jews*, as much as of Christians, was forced, by the evidence of History, to confess that such Men lived amongst the *Jews*, as were inspired with the holy Spirit of *God*; and that Fire descended from Heaven upon the Sacrifices of *Moses* and *Elias*. And verily 'tis well worth our observation, that amongst the *Hebrews* there were not only grievous punishments appointed for such Men as did falsly assume to themselves the *Prophetical Function*, but also many Kings and great Men, that might have by that means purchased authority to themselves, and likewise very many learned Men as was *Esdras* and others, that never durst arrogate to themselves this dignity; nor any Man else, for divers Ages before the times of *Jesus*.

SECT. XVI.

The same is proved by the Oracle and Predictions.

BUT more unlikely it is, that so many thousand People should be imposed upon, in the avouching of a perpetual and publick Prodigy, (as

(as we may call it) to wit, the *holy Oracle*, which after a reſplendent manner ſhined from the breſt-plate of the *High-Prieſt*: The truth whereof was ſo ſtrongly believed by all the *Jews* to have continued until the deſtruction of the firſt Temple, that out of all doubt, their Anceſtors had certain knowledge concerning the ſame.

Like to this from *miracles*, there is another argument as forcible and effectual to prove *GOD's providence*, taken from thoſe *predictions of future events*, which among the *Hebrews* were many and manifeſt. Such was that prophecy of his being made Childleſs who ſhould attempt to redifie *Jericho*: and that of the overthrow of the Temple at *Bethel* by a King, named *Joſiah*, foretold above Three Hundred Years before the thing came to paſs. So likewiſe the very name and chief acts of *Cyrus* foretold by *Eſaiah*: the event of *Hieruſalem*'s ſiege by the *Chaldeans*, foreſhown by *Jeremiah*: So alſo *Daniel*'s *prediction* touching the tranſlation of the Empire of the *Aſſyrians* unto the *Medes* and *Perſians*; then from them unto *Alexander* of *Macedon*, whoſe Empire ſhould afterward, in part, be divided among the Succeſſors of *Ptolomy* and *Seleucus*. And what evils alſo the *Hebrew* Nation ſhould ſuffer from all theſe, but eſpecially from *Antiochus Epiphanes*; which were ſo clearly foretold, that *Porphyry* who compared with theſe Predictions, ſuch *Grecian* Hiſtories as were extant in his time, could no otherwiſe tell how to ſhift them off, than by ſaying that thoſe things which were *fathered* upon *Daniel*, were written after ſuch time as they came to paſs; which is all one, as if one ſhould deny that that was written in the time of *Auguſtus* which hath been publiſhed in *Virgil*'s name,

name, and was always reputed for *Virgil*'s work. For there was never any more scruple made of the former amongst the *Hebrews* than of this latter amongst the *Romans*.

To these things we may add very many, and most famous Oracles among the People of *Mexico* and *Peru*; which foretold the coming of the *Spaniards* into those Countries, and the calamities which should thereupon follow. And hither also may be referred, not a few dreams, so exactly agreeing with the events, which both in themselves and in their causes, were wholly unknown to them that dreamed; that they cannot, without great immodesty, be referred to chance, or to natural causes: of which kind *Tertullian*, in his Book *Of the Soul*, hath collected illustrious examples, out of the most approved Authors. Spectres also or apparitions belong to this head, which have been not only seen, but heard to speak: as those Historians relate, who are the farthest from superstitious credulity; and is reported by Witnesses of our own Age, who have lived in *China*, and in *Mexico*, and other parts of *America*. Nor are publick trials of innocence, by touching of red-hot Plow-shares, to be despised: which the Histories of so many *German* Nations, and the Laws themselves have remembred.

SECT.

SECT. XVII.

The Objection is answered, why Miracles are not now to be seen.

NEither is there any reason to object against such Miracles, because there are not the like to be seen in these days, neither the like *predictions* heard of; for 'tis a sufficient proof of *Divine providence*, that such things did come to pass at any time: which being once granted, it will follow, that *God* may be believed with as much *providence* and *wisdom*, now to cause them to surcease, as anciently he used the same. Neither stands it with reason, that those Laws, which were given to the Universe concerning the natural course of things, and uncertainty of future events should be lightly or always transgressed: but only at such a time, when either there was a just cause, as when the worship of the true *God* was almost banished out of the World, residing only in a little part thereof, to wit, in *Judæa*, where it necessarily was to be (as it were) fortified with new aids against the impieties wherewith it was compassed about; or when *Christian Religion* (whereof by and by we shall speak more particularly,) was first by *God*'s *decree* to be published thorowout the World.

SECT.

SECT. XVIII.

And that now there is such liberty in offending.

THere are those who are wont to doubt of the Divine Providence, because they see so much wickedness hath, like a Deluge, overspread the face of the whole Earth: which Divine Providence, they contend, if there were any, would have made its chiefest business to restrain and suppress. But this is easily answered, considering that when *God* had created Man with freedom to do good and evil, reserving absolute and immutable goodness to himself, it had not been reasonable to have put such a stop to evil actions, as should have been contrary to that liberty. Howbeit to keep Men from sin, *God* useth every kind of means, which is not repugnant to the liberty aforesaid. Such is the ordaining and publishing of the *Law*, together with inward and outward admonitions, both by *threats* also and *promises*. Nor doth he suffer the effects of wickedness to spread so far as they might have done: whence it is that all kind of government could never yet be subverted, nor the knowledge of *Divine Laws* utterly extinguished or abolished. Neither may *those delinquences* which are permitted to be done amongst Men, be thought altogether unprofitable; Since that (as before we have toucht) they may be used either for the punishment of other no less lewd transgressors; or for the chastisement of such as sometimes wander from the way of vertue; or lastly, to exact some worthy pattern of patience

patience and constancy from such as have made good proficiency in the school of *piety* and *vertue*. Lastly, even they whose wickedness seems to be winked at for a time, are wont to pay dearly for it at last; and to be reckoned withal the more severely, because they have been long forborn: in so much that it is plain, they suffer what God would, who have done what He would not.

SECT. XIX.

Insomuch that good Men are oppressed.

BUT, and if sometimes there seem to be no punishment at all inflicted upon prophane offendors, and even some *good men* (which may occasion the weak to be offended) are sore oppressed by the insolencies of the wicked, who many times make them not only to lead a wearisome and miserable *life*, but also to undergo a disgraceful *death*: we are not presently to banish from humane affairs the Providence of God, which hath been proved, as we have now said, by strong reasons; but rather (as the wisest sort of Men have thought) we should conclude and argue thus:

turn over 8 leaves to find it follows.

SECT.

judgment of their adversaries; who had nothing to object against them, save their simplicity, which of all other dispositions is the most unlikely to forge a lye. Nay, there were none among these Primitive *Christians* (whereof we speak) who did not suffer grievous torments for professing that *Jesus was risen*: and many of them were put unto most exquisite pains of death for bearing testimony of the same. Now granting it to be possible, that a Man in his wits may be content to endure such things, for some opinion which he hath conceived, and really believes in his mind; yet that for a falshood, which he knows to be so, not only some one Man, but a great many Men, who are like to gain nothing at all by making that falshood to be believed, should consent to suffer such cruel torments, is a thing altogether incredible.

Now that these were not Mad-men, both their conversation and their writings do abundantly testifie. Likewise what is spoken of the first Apostles, may also be said of *Paul*, who openly taught that he saw *Christ* sitting in Heaven: who also was not inferiour to any in the *Jewish Religion*; nor might he have wanted dignities and preferments, if he would have followed the foot-steps of his *Fathers*.

Whereas on the contrary, by taking upon him the profession of *Christianity*, he became liable to the hatred and malignity of his kinsfolks, and and ingaged himself to undertake difficult, dangerous, and laborious travels through the World; and last of all to undergo a disgraceful death and torment.

SECT. VIII.

Answer to the Objection, that the Resurrection seems impossible.

SUCH and so great testimonies no Man can disprove or gainsay, unless some will reply, that the thing it self is impossible to be done: for so are those things which imply a contradiction, as they speak. Howbeit that cannot be affirmed of this matter. It might indeed, if one could say that one and the self same Man lived and died at the self-same time: But that a Man may be restored from death to life, especially by the power and vertue of him who first gave life and being unto Man, I see no reason why it should be accounted for a thing *impossible*.

Neither hath it been thought *impossible* by wise Men; for *Plato* writes that this was done to *Eris* an *Armenian*. And the like is related of a certain Woman by *Heraclides* a Philosopher of *Pontus*, of *Aristaus* by *Herodotus*; and of another by *Plutarch*: all which, (whether true or false) do shew that in the opinion of learned and wise Men the thing was conceived to be possible.

SECT.

SECT. IX.

The Resurrection of Jesus being granted, the Truth of his Doctrine is confirmed.

NOW if it be neither impossible that *Christ* should return to Life again; and it doth sufficiently appear by great testimonies (wherewith *Rabbi Bechai*, a Master of the *Jews* was so convinced, that he acknowledged the truth of this thing) and this Christ himself also, as both his Disciples and others confess, did publish a new Doctrine, as by a Divine commandment: truly it necessarily follows, that that Doctrine is true. For it doth not consist with the divine Justice and Wisdom to honour Him after so excellent a manner; who had committed the crime of falsifying in so weighty a matter. Especially considering that before his Death He had foretold to his Disciples, both his Death, and the kind of it, and his Resurrection to Life again: adding this withal, that these things should therefore come to pass, that they might testifie and confirm the truth of his Doctrine.

And thus much for the Arguments which arise from the facts themselves which were done: Let us proceed to those which arise from the nature and quality of his Doctrine.

SECT. X.

Christian Religion preferred before all others.

AND here truly we must say, that either all kind of *divine worship* whatsoever must be rejected, and utterly banished from among Men, (which impiety will never enter into the heart of any one that can believe *there is a God* who takes care of all things; and withal considers how Man is endued with excellency of understanding, and liberty to chuse what is morally good or evil; and upon that account is capable, as of reward, so of punishment;) or else this *Religion* is to be admitted and approved of for the *very best:* not only in regard of the outward testimonies of *works* and *miracles* aforesaid; but also in consideration of such *inward* and *essential properties*, as are agreeing thereunto: namely, because there is not, neither ever was there any other *Religion* in the whole World, that can be produced, either more *honourable* for excellency of reward, or more absolute and *perfect* for precepts, or more *admirable* for the manner according to which it was commanded to be propagated and divulged.

SECT.

SECT. XI.

For excellency of Reward.

FOR to begin with the reward that is at the end propounded to Man, which though it be the last in fruition and execution, yet is it the first in his intention: If we consider the institution of the *Jewish Religion* by the hand of *Moses*, and the plain or express covenant of the *Law*, we shall find nothing there promised save the welfare and *happiness of this life:* as namely, a fruitful Land, abundance of Corn and Victual, victory over their Enemies, soundness of Body, length of Days, the comfortable blessing of a hopeful Issue, and surviving Posterity, and the like. For if there be any thing beyond, it is involved in dark shadows, or must be collected by wise and difficult reasoning: Which indeed was the cause why many (in particular the *Sadducees*, who professed themselves to be followers and observers of *Moses* his *Law*,) had no hope of enjoying any happiness after this life.

As for the *Grecians*, who received their learning from the *Chaldæans* and *Ægyptians*, and had some hope in another World, after this life was ended; they spake thereof after a very doubtful manner; as appears by the disputations of *Socrates*, by the Writings of *Tully*, *Seneca*, and others. And the Arguments they produce for it are grounded upon uncertainties; proving no more the happiness of a *Man* than of a *Beast*: Which while some of them observed, it was no wonder if they imagined, that *Souls* were tran-

ſlated and conveyed from Men to Beaſts, and again from Beaſts into Men.

But becauſe this opinion was not confirmed by any teſtimonies, or grounded upon certain reaſon, (and yet it was undeniable that there is ſome end propoſed to Man's actions,) therefore others were induced to think, that *vertue* was the end or reward of Men's endeavours; and that a *wiſe Man* was happy enough, even though he were put into that tormenting braſen *Bull* made by *Phalaris*. Howbeit this fancy was juſtly diſtaſteful and improbable to another ſort, who ſaw well enough that Man's *happineſs*, eſpecially the higheſt, could not conſiſt in any thing that was accompanied with perils, troubles, torment and death (unleſs we have a mind to follow the ſound of words without the ſenſe of things:) Wherefore they placed Man's *chiefeſt happineſs* and end in ſuch things as were delightful and pleaſing to *ſenſe*. But yet this opinion alſo was diſproved and ſufficiently confuted by many, as being prejudicial to all *honeſty*, the ſeeds whereof are rooted in our hearts by *nature*: as alſo becauſe it debaſes Man, who is advanced to a higher pitch, and throws him down into the rank of Beaſts; which ſtoop down and pore upon nothing, but what is on the Earth.

With theſe and ſuch like uncertainties and doubtings was *Mankind* diſtracted at that time when *Chriſt* brought in the true knowledge of the *right end*: who promiſed unto his followers after their departure hence, a life, not only without death, without ſorrow and trouble, but attended with the higheſt joy and *happineſs*: and that not of one part of Man alone, to wit, of his *Soul*, (the felicity whereof after this life, partly by proba-

probable conjecture, and partly from tradition, was hoped for before) but also of his *Body* and *Soul* together. And this most justly; that the Body, which for the Divine Law, must often suffer grievances, torments and death, may not be without a recompence of *reward*. Now the reward and promised joys are not vile and base, as good chear and dainty fare, wherewith the more carnal sort of *Jews* feed their hopes; or the embraces of beautiful Women, which the *Turks* expect to enjoy after death: for both these *sensualities* are proper to this frail life, at the best *being* but helps or remedies of mortality, the former of them conducing to the preservation of every particular Man or Beast: and the latter for the continuation of the same creatures by *succession* in their kind. But by the happiness aforesaid our *Bodies* shall be indued with constant vigour, agility, strength, and more than a star-like beauty. In the *Soul* there shall be an understanding without error, even of *God* himself and his Divine Providence, or whatsoever is now hid from us. And a *will* freed from all turbulency of passions, busied chiefly about the sight, the admiring and praising of the *Almighty*. In a word, all things much greater and better, than can be conceived by comparison with the best and greatest things in this World.

SECT. XII.

Answer to an Objection, that Bodies once Dead cannot be revived again.

BESIDES the doubt but lately answered, there is another *difficulty* objected against this *Doctrine* of the *Resurrection*: namely, how can it be possible for *humane bodies* once dissolved into dust and corruption ever to be united and set together again? But this relies upon no reason. For since it is agreed among most Philosophers, that howsoever things be changed, there remains still the same matter, capable of divers Species or forms; who dare say, that either God doth not know in what places, though never so distant, the parts of that matter are, which belong to a humane Body; or, that He wants power to reduce them and set them together again; and do that in his Universe, which we see Chymists do in their Fornaces, and Vessels, gather together and unite things of the same nature, though scattered and dispersed? And that a thing also may return to the form of its original, though the species be never so much altered, we see an example in the nature of things; as in the Seeds of Plants and living Creatures.

Neither is that knot impossible to be unlooſed, which is tyed by many; concerning those humane bodies which pass into the nourishment of wild Beasts or Cattle; who, being fed with them, become again the food of Man. For we must know, that the greatest *portion* of such things as we eat is not converted into integral parts

parts of our bodies; but either turned into excrements, or humors of the body, as *Fleam* and *Choler*; yea, much of that which becomes our nourishment is wasted away either by diseases, or by inward natural heat, or by the Air about us. All which being so; he that so carefully regards all kinds of bruit Beasts, that none of them perish, the same *God* with a more special *providence* can also provide for humane bodies, that so much of them as becomes the food of other Men shall no more be converted into the *substance* of those that eat them, than are *poisons* or *physical potions*; and the rather, because it is in a manner naturally apparent, that humane flesh was not intended for Man's food. Or suppose it were not so, but something which hath made an accession to the latter body must be taken from it again; this will not make it not to be the same body: for even in this life there happen greater changes of particles, than this comes to. Yea, we see that a Butterfly is in a Worm; and the substance of Herbs or Wine in some very small thing; from whence they may be restored to their former just magnitude. Surely, since both these and many other things may without any inconvenience be supposed, there is no reason that the restitution of a Body dissolved should be reckoned among impossible things: which learned Men, *Zoroaster* among the *Chaldæans*, almost all the *Stoicks*, and *Theopompus* among the *Peripateticks*, believed not only might, but should be.

SECT.

SECT. XIII.

The excellency of holy Precepts given for the worſhip of God.

THE ſecond thing wherein *Chriſtian Religion* excells all others that are, or ever were, or can be imagined, is the great *holineſs of Laws and Precepts*; both in thoſe things that appertain to the Worſhip of God, and in thoſe that concern other matters.

The holy Offices of the *Pagans* throughout almoſt the whole World, (as *Porphyry* ſhews at large, and the Navigations of our times have diſcovered) were full of cruelty; For it was the uſage, in a manner every where, to appeaſe the Gods, even with the Sacrifice of Humane Blood. Which cuſtom neither the *Greek* learning, nor the *Roman* Laws took away; as appears by what we read concerning the Victims made to *Bacchus Omeſtes* among the *Greeks*; and of a *Greek* Man and Woman, and a Man and Woman of *Gaul*, which were ſacrificed to *Jupiter Latiaris* at *Rome*: Thoſe moſt holy Myſteries alſo, whether of *Ceres*, or of *Liber Pater*, were as full as ever they could hold of filthineſs and obſcenity; as appeared when the ſecrets of this Religion were once laid open, and began to be divulged: of which *Clemens Alexandrinus*, and others, have given us a large account. Thoſe *Feſtival* days alſo which were conſecrated to the honour of the *Gods*, were celebrated with ſuch ſpectacles, that grave *Cato* was aſhamed to be preſent at them. But in the *Jewiſh Religion* there was nothing unſeemly,

seemly, nothing dishoneſt or unlawful. Howbeit leſt the People that were prone to *Idolatry*, ſhould decline or fall back from the *true Religion*, it was loaded and burdened with many *precepts* concerning ſuch things as in themſelves were neither good nor evil; ſuch were the *ſacrificing* of Beaſts, the *Circumciſion*, an exact *reſt* from labour upon the *Sabbath*, and the prohibition of eating ſundry kind of *meats*; ſome of which cuſtoms the *Turks* have borrowed from them; adding further a prohibition for drinking Wine.

But the *Chriſtian Religion* teacheth, that as *God* is a moſt *pure Spirit*; So is he to be worſhipped with *pureneſs* of mind and *Spirit*, together with ſuch works as in their own nature without a *precept* are moſt laudable and honeſt. Thus the profeſſors thereof are not to circumciſe the fleſh, but their carnal *luſts* and *deſires*; not to keep Holy-day by a reſt from all kind of work whatſoever, but only from that which is unlawful. Nor are we to offer unto *God* the blood and fat of Beaſts; but if need be, even our own blood for the teſtimony of the *truth*. And what bounty or liberality ſoever we beſtow upon poor and neceſſitous *perſons*, to look upon it as given to *God* himſelf. We need not now abſtain from any kind of meat or drink, but may and ought to uſe them both with moderation, ſo that our health be not thereby impaired; ſometimes notwithſtanding ſubduing our Bodies to our minds by *faſting*, that they thereby may be the better fitted and prepared for more chearful *devotion*. But the chief point of this Religion, it is every where apparent, lies in a pious confidence: by which being compoſed to a faithful obedience, we rely wholly upon God, and ſtedfaſtly believe the

the performance of his promiſes. Whence there ariſes a good Hope, and a true Love both of God and our Neighbours: which makes us obey his Precepts, not in a baſe ſervile manner, for fear of puniſhment; but that we may pleaſe him, and have him, out of his great goodneſs, our Father and Rewarder.

Moreover we are taught to *pray*, not for riches or honours, or ſuch things as many times do hurt to thoſe that wiſh much for them: but firſt and chiefly that which tends to *God's glory*; then for our ſelves, ſo much of theſe periſhing things as nature deſires; leaving the reſt to Divine Providence: and ſatisfying our ſelves that all ſhall be well, which way ſoever things go. But for eternal things, it teaches us to pray with the moſt earneſt deſire, *viz.* for pardon of our ſins paſt, and the aſſiſtance of his Spirit in time to come; whereby being ſtrengthned againſt all terrors and allurements, we may conſtantly perſiſt in a pious courſe of life.

This is the true *worſhip* of *God* in *Chriſtian Religion*, than which nothing can be invented more worthy of Almighty God.

SECT. XIV.

Concerning the Offices of Humanity which we owe unto our Neighbour.

LIKE to theſe are the duties we owe unto our Neighbour. As for *Mahumet's Religion*, being hatcht in Wars, it breaths nothing but Wars, and is propagated by Wars, and Hoſtility. Thus

Thus the Laws and Statutes of the *Lacedæmonians*, which among the *Greeks* were most applauded, even by the Oracle of *Apollo*; *Aristotle* notes, and blames them for it, were wholly directed to warlike force. And yet the same *Aristotle* maintains War against *Barbarians* to be natural: when, on the contrary, it is certain that Men were by nature made to friendship and society. For what is more unjust and unequal, than for single Murders to be punisht; but to vaunt and triumph in the slaughter of whole Nations, as in a glorious exploit? And yet, that so much celebrated *Roman* Common-wealth, how did it come by such a Name, but by Wars? which oft-times were manifestly unjust, as they themselves confess those were, against *Sardinia* and *Cyprus*. And truly generally, as the best Historians have committed to memory, most Nations thought robberies and plunders, without the bounds of their own Country, to be no disgrace at all to them. The exacting of revenge, *Aristotle* and *Cicero* make a piece of vertue: To behold Sword-players cut and slash each other, was one of the publick recreations of the *Pagans*: And nothing more ordinary than to expose their Children.

Among the *Hebrews* indeed there was a better Law, and more holy Discipline: but yet to a People of an impotent anger some things were connived at, and some things indulged. As a violent seizure upon the *seven* Nations, who had deserved it: with which not contented, they prosecuted all that differ'd from them with a cruel hatred; the signs and marks of which yet remain, in the prayers which they conceive against us Christians. But to prosecute him that hurt them, by rendring like for like; and to kill,

by

by their own private hands, him that had slain any of their Kindred, was permitted by the Law it self. Whereas the Law of Christ forbids us to revenge any injury that is done us, either in words or deeds; lest that wickedness which we condemn in others, we should again allow by its imitation. It would have us do good to all, to the good indeed chiefly, but to the wicked also; after the Example of God, who bestows the benefit of the Sun, the Stars, the Rain, the Winds and Showres, in common upon all Men whatsoever.

SECT. XV.

Of the Conjunction of Man and Woman.

THE Conjunction of Man and Woman, whereby Mankind is propagated, is a thing most worthy of the care of Laws. Which part of them it is no wonder the *Pagans* neglected, when they told such lewd stories of the Whoredoms and Adulteries of the Gods which they worshipped. Nay, the filthy and abominable use which one Man made of another, was defended by the example of their Gods. Into whose number, upon that account, *Ganymedes* was anciently put, and afterwards *Antinous*. Which flagitious wickedness is now most frequent among the *Mahometans*, and is thought lawful by the *Chineses*, and other Nations. Yea, the Philosophers of *Greece* seem to have made it their business, to find out an honest Name, for that most filthy thing.

Among

Among which *Greek* Philosophers the most excellent commending community of Women; what did they do else, but turn a whole City into one common Brothel-house? A most unworthy thing: for since there is among some mute Animals a certain conjugal League or Covenant, how much more equal is it, that so holy a Creature as Man should not be born of uncertain seed; with the extinction of all those mutual affections, which are naturally between Parents and their Children.

The *Hebrew* Law indeed forbad all filthiness; but both allowed one Man to have more Wives; and gave the Husband also a right, for any cause, to put away his Wife. Which the *Mahometans* at this day use; and the *Greeks* and *Latins* anciently with such licence, that the *Lacedæmonians* and *Cato*, even lent their Wives to other Men, to use for a time.

But the most perfect Law of *Christ* penetrates to the very roots of Vices: and holds him who only attempts upon the chastity of any Woman, or looks lasciviously upon her, to be guilty before GOD, the Judge and Searcher of the Hearts, of that crime, which, though not acted yet, was desired. And since all true friendship is perpetual and insoluble, He would deservedly have that to be such, which, with the society of minds, contains also a conjunction of Bodies. Which, without all doubt, is most profitable also for the right education of those Children, that are the fruit of that Conjunction. Among the *Pagans*, some few Nations were content with one Wife; as the *Germans* and the *Romans*. Which the Christians now follow; that the mind of the Wife being intirely given to the Husband, may be compensated

penſated with an equal retribution: and the government of the Family may the better proceed under the direction of one Ruler: and divers Mothers may not bring in diſcord among Children.

SECT. XVI.

Touching the uſe of Temporal goods.

AND now to come to the uſe of thoſe things, which are vulgarly called *Goods*; we find that theſts were permitted by ſome *Paganiſh* Nations, as the *Ægyptians* and *Lacedæmonians*: and they that did not allow this to private Men, did publickly little elſe, as the *Romans*. Who muſt have returned to their Huts and Cottages, the *Roman* Orator ſaid, if they ſhould have been bound to reſtore to every body his own?

The *Hebrews* indeed had no ſuch cuſtom, yet their *Law*, that it might ſute it ſelf in ſome meaſure, to the humor of that People, permitted them to take *uſury* of ſtrangers; amongſt other things promiſing the reward of riches to them that obſerved the *Law*.

But the *Law* of *Chriſtianity* forbids not only all kind of *injuſtice* towards all ſort of Men, but alſo prohibits us to take any carking and exceſſive *care* for theſe tranſitory things, becauſe our mind is not able diligently and duly to attend unto two ſeveral matters; either of which are enough to take up the whole Man, and oftentimes draw us into contrary thoughts and counſels. Beſides, the exceſſive *care* both for getting and keeping

SECT. XX.

The same Argument is retorted to prove that the Soul survives the Body.

FOrasmuch as *God* hath an *eye* unto all Mens actions, and in himself is *most just*, suffering such things to come to pass as we see they do; therefore we must expect that there will be some future judgment after this life, to the end such *notorious transgressions* may not remain unpunished, nor *well deserving virtue* be unrecompenced with due comfort and reward.

SECT. XXI.

Which is proved by Tradition.

FUrther, to confirm this *truth*, it must necessarily be admitted, that the *Souls* of *Men* do survive their Bodies. Which most ancient *Tradition*, was derived from our very first Parents (for from whence else could it proceed?) unto almost all civiliz'd People; as is plain by *Homer's Verses*; and by *Philosophers*, not only of the *Grecians*, but likewise the *Druides* in *France*, and *Brachmans* in *India*, and by those relations also which *many Writers* have published concerning the *Egyptians*, and *Thracians*, and *Germans*. In like manner touching *God's judgment* to come after this life, many things we see were extant, as well among the *Grecians*, as also among the

Egyptians and *Indians*, as we learn out of *Strabo*, *Diogenes Laertius*, and *Plutarch*; whereunto may be added that old *Tradition* of the *Consumption of the World by fire*, which was anciently found in *Hystaspis* and the *Sibyls*, and now also in *Ovid* and *Lucan*, and the *Indians* of *Siam*: of which thing the Astrologers have noted this to be a sign, that the Sun draws nearer and nearer to the earth. Yea, when the *Canaries*, *America*, and other foreign places were first discovered, this same opinion of the *immortality of Mens souls, and the last Judgment* was found among the Inhabitants there.

SECT. XXII.

Against which no contrary reason can be brought.

NEither can there any reason in nature be given to disprove so ancient and common received *tradition*. For every thing that in this World comes to an end, perishes either through the *opposition* of some more forcible *contrary agent*, as coldness in any subject, by reason of the more prevalent power and intention of heat; or through the substraction of that *subject*, whereupon it depends, as the quantity of the glass, when the glass is broken; or through the defect and want of the *efficient cause*, as light by the Sun-setting. Now none of all these can be said to happen unto the soul of Man: Not the *first*, because there is nothing that is *contrary to the Soul*; nay, it self is of such a peculiar nature, that

that it is apt to receive such things as are *contrary* between themselves, at the same time together, after its own, that is, after a *Spiritual and Intellectual* manner. Not the *second*, for there is not any *subject* whereon the nature of the *Soul* hath any dependence: if there were, in all probability it should be the *humane body*: but that this cannot be, it is manifest, because when the *powers* and *abilities* of the Bodies are tired in their operations; the mind alone doth not by motion contract any *wearinesse*. Likewise the powers of the *Body* are impaired and weakned by the redundancy or excess of the *object*, as the sense of seeing by the full splendor and bright face of the *Sun*: but the more excellent *objects* that the *Soul* is conversant about, as about *universals* and figures *abstracted* from sensible matter, it receives thereby the more *perfection*. Again, the *powers* that depend upon the *Body* are only busied about such things as are limited to particular *time* and *place*, according to the nature and property of the *Body* it self: but the *mind* hath a more noble *object*, and ascends to the contemplation of that which is *infinite* and *eternal*. Wherefore then seeing that the *Soul* depends not upon the *Body* in its *operation*, neither doth it in its *essence*: for we cannot discern the nature of invisible things otherwise than by their operations. Neither is the *third* way of corruption incident to the *Soul*, there being no *efficient cause* from which the *Soul* proceeds by a continual emanation. For we cannot say our Parents are such a cause; since, when they are dead, their Children are wont to live. But if we will needs make *some cause*, from which the *Soul* proceeds, then we can imagine no other, save the first and *universal cause* of all things,

which as in respect of its power, is never *deficient*, so in respect of its *will* to be *defective*, that is, for the *Almighty to will* the extinction and destruction of the *Soul*, no Man can ever be able to prove.

SECT. XXIII.

Many Reasons may be alledged for it.

NAY there are many *strong Arguments* for the contrary, as namely, the *dominion* given unto Man over his own actions; the *natural desire* that is in him to be immortal; the force of conscience comforting the mind for well done actions, though very troublesome, and supporting it with a certain hope; and on the contrary, the *sting* of a gnawing conscience at the remembrance of the ungodly and wicked actions, especially when the Hour of Death approacheth, as if it had a sense of an *imminent judgment*. And this *gnawing worm* of conscience the most prophane wretches and wicked Tyrants have not been able oftentimes to extinguish in them, no not then when they most of all desired it, as divers Examples do testifie.

SECT. XXIV.

Whence it follows, that the end of all shall be Man's happiness after this life.

SEeing then the *Soul* is of a nature that in it self hath no ground or *cause* of its own corruption; and seeing also that *God* hath given us many signs and tokens whereby we ought to understand, that it is *his will*, the soul should survive the body; what more *noble end* can be propounded to Man than *the state of eternal happiness*? which in effect is the same that *Plato*, and the *Pythagoreans* spake of, saying, that *it were good for man if he could become most like unto God.*

SECT. XXV.

Which to obtain, Men must get the true Religion.

NOW what this *happiness* is, and how 'tis to be attained, Men may search by probable *conjectures:* but if any thing concerning *this matter* be revealed by *God*, that must be held for a most certain and undoubted *truth*: which since *Christian Religion* pretends to bring unto us above others, it shall be examined in the next Book whether or no Men ought to give credit thereunto, and assuredly build their faith thereon.

The Second Book OF THE TRUTH OF Christian Religion.

SECT. I.

To prove the Truth of Christian Religion.

IT is not our purpose in this Second Book to handle all the Points of *Christianity*; but after our hearty Prayers made to *Christ* the King of Heaven, that he would grant us the assistance of his *holy Spirit*, whereby we may be enabled for such a *Work*, we shall only endeavour to make it appear that the *Christian Religion* it self is most *true* and certain. Which I thus begin.

SECT. II.

Here is shewn that Jesus lived.

THAT there was such a Person as *Jesus* of *Nazareth*, who lived heretofore in *Judæa*, when *Tiberius* was Emperor of *Rome*, is not only most constantly professed by all Christians, who are scattered over the face of all the Earth: but acknowledged by all the *Jews*, who now are, or ever wrote since those times. Nay, the very *Pagan* Writers, that is, such as are neither of the *Jewish* nor *Christian Religion*, namely, *Suetonius*, *Tacitus*, *Pliny* the younger, and many more after them, do testifie the same.

SECT. III.

And was put to an ignominious Death.

THAT the same *Jesus* was nailed to a Cross by *Pontius Pilate*, Governor of *Judæa*, is confessed also by all Christians; though it might seem very disgraceful to them, to be the Worshippers of such a Lord. The *Jews* also do the like; though they are not ignorant that upon this account they are very odious to Christians, in whose Dominions they live: because their Ancestors were the Men, that moved *Pilate*, and perswaded him to pass the sentence of Death upon *Jesus*. The *Pagan* Writers also, now named, have delivered the same to Posterity. Yea, the Acts of *Pilate* were

were extant a long time after, from whence this might have been proved; to which Christians never made their Appeal. For neither did *Julian* himself, nor any other adversaries of *Christianity* ever make doubt hereof: So that hence it appears, that there was never any more certain story than this; which (we see) may be confirmed, not only by the testimonies of some few Men, but also by the approbation of several Nations otherwise disagreeing and jarring among themselves.

SECT. IV.

Yet afterward was worshipped by prudent and godly Men.

ALL which though it be most true, yet we see how that throughout the remotest parts of the World he is worshipped as *Lord*; and that not in our days only, or those which are lately passed, but ever since the time that this was done; to wit, ever since the Reign of *Nero* the Emperor, when many People that professed this worship of *Christ*, and *Christian Religion*, were for that cause tortured and put to death, as *Tacitus* and others do witness.

SECT. V.

The cause whereof was, for that in his life time there were Miracles done by him.

NOW among such as professed *Christianity*, there were always many Persons, who were both judicious, and not unlearned. Such as (to say nothing now of the *Jews*) *Sergius*, Governour of *Cyprus*, *Dionysius Areopagita*, *Polycarpus*, *Justinus*, *Irenæus*, *Athenagoras*, *Origen*, *Tertullian*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, with divers others; who almost all being brought up in other religions, and having no hopes of any Wealth or Preferment by *Christianity*, yet became worshippers of *this Man* that died so ignominious a death, and exhibited due honour to him as *God*: Of which no other reason can be given, but this alone; that they made diligent enquiry, as became prudent Men, in a matter of greatest moment: and found that what was bruited abroad concerning the Miracles wrought by *Christ*, was true; and relied upon firm witnesses. As the curing, and that with his word only, and before all the People, divers grievous and inveterate Diseases; the restoring of Sight to him that was born blind; the multiplying of a few Loaves. more than once, for the feeding many Thousands, who could testifie the truth of it; the recalling of the Dead to Life again; and many more of the like kind. The report of which things had then such a certain and undoubted original; that neither *Celsus*, nor *Julian*, when they wrote against Christians, durst deny there were

were some Prodigies done by *Christ*; and the *Hebrews* in the Talmudical Books do openly confess it.

SECT. VI.

Which Miracles were not wrought either by the help of Nature, or assistance of the Devil; but meerly by the Divine Power of GOD.

THAT these wondrous Works were not wrought by any Natural Power, it is manifest, by this very thing, that they are called *wonders* and *miracles*. Nor is it possible by the force of nature, that any grievous Diseases and Infirmities should be cured meerly by a Man's *voice*, or by the *vertue* of a *Touch*, and that even upon a sudden. And if such Works could have any way been ascribed to a Natural efficacy, it would have been said before now, either by those that were professed enemies of *Christ* while he lived upon Earth, or by those that have been Adversaries of his *Gospel* since his death.

By the like Argument we may prove, that they were not jugling delusions, because they were done openly in the sight of all the People: amongst whom divers of the Learned sort did malign and bear ill will unto *Christ*, not without envy observing all that he did. Add further, that the like Works were often iterated, and the effects thereof were not transitory but permanent and durable. All which being duly pondered, it must needs follow (as the *Jews* have confessed)

feſſed) that theſe Works proceeded from a more than Natural or Humane power, that is, from ſome Spirit either good or evil. That they proceeded not from any *evil Spirit*, may be proved, becauſe that the Doctrine of *Chriſt* (for the confirmation whereof theſe Works were wrought) was quite oppoſite and contrary to bad *Spirits*. For it prohibits the worſhipping of *evil Angels*, and diſſwades Men from all uncleanneſs of affections and manners, wherein ſuch *Spirits* are much delighted. And this is alſo plain, for that whereſoever the Doctrine of the Goſpel was received and eſtabliſhed, there followed the downfal of the worſhip of Dæmons, and of Magical Arts: and one God was worſhipped with a deteſtation of Dæmons; whoſe power and authority *Porphyry* acknowledges, was broken by the coming of *Chriſt*.

Neither is it to be thought that any wicked *Spirit* is ſo ignorant and fooliſh, as to effect and often bring to paſs things that are cauſes of its own hurt and diſgrace, and no way conducing to its honour or benefit. Beſides, it ſtands no way with the wiſdom or goodneſs of *God* himſelf to believe that he would ſuffer ſo harmleſs and innocent Men, ſuch as feared him, to be deceived by the *deluſion* of *Devils*: and ſuch were the firſt followers of *Chriſt*, as is plain by their innocent life, and by the many calamities which they endured for conſcience ſake.

But on the other ſide, if thou affirmeſt that thoſe works of Chriſt proceeded from ſome *good Spirits* which are inferiour to *God*; in ſo ſaying thou doſt confeſs that the ſame works were well pleaſing unto *God*, and did tend to the honour of his name; foraſmuch as *good Spirits* do nothing but

but what is acceptable and glorious unto *God*: To say nothing now of some of *Christ*'s works, which were so miraculous, that they seem to have *God* himself for the *author* of them, and could not have been done but by the immediate finger of an *omnipotent power*, as specially, the restoring divers Persons from Death unto Life again.

Now *God* doth not produce any Miracle, nor suffer any such Wonders to be wrought without just cause: For it becomes not a wise Maker of Laws to forsake and depart from his own *Laws*, unless upon some good and weighty reason: Now no other cause of these things can be given than that which was alledged by *Christ* himself, namely, that hereby his doctrine might be verified and confirmed. And doubtless they that were Spectators of his Works, could conceive no other reason thereof: among which since there were (as was said) many godly Men, piously and devoutly affected, it is horrible impiety to imagine, that *God* did work these things only to delude and deceive them. And this was one cause why very many of the *Jews* who lived about the time of *Jesus*, even such as could not be perswaded to relinquish or omit one jot of *Moses* his Law, such as those who were called *Nazarenes* and *Ebionites*, did notwithstanding acknowledge that this *Jesus* was a *Doctor* or *Master* sent from Heaven.

SECT.

SECT. VII.

Christ's Resurrection proved by credible Reasons.

BEsides the Miracles that *Christ* wrought to confirm his Doctrine, another like Argument may be taken from his wonderful *Resurrection* to Life again, after that He was Crucified, Dead, and Buried.

For the *Christians* of all Ages and Countries alledge the same, not only for a truth, but also as the most strong ground and chiefest foundation of their *Faith*; which could not be, unless those that first taught *Christianity*, did perswade their Auditors that the thing was so for certain; And yet they could not induce any wise Man to the belief hereof, unless they could verily affirm, that themselves were eye-witnesses of this matter. For without such an ocular testimony, no Man in his wits would have given credit unto them; especially in such times, when to believe them was to expose themselves to the greatest mischiefs and dangers. But that this was their constant assertion, both their own Books, and other Writings do testifie. For out of their Books it appears, that they appealed unto Five hundred Witnesses that had beheld *Jesus* after he was risen from the Dead. Now it is not the fashion of lyars and dissemblers to appeal to so great a number of Witnesses. Neither could it possibly so fall out that so many Men should agree and conspire together to bear false witness. Or suppose there had been no other witnesses, save those twelve known

known *Apostles*, the first publishers of *Christian doctrine*, yet this had been sufficient. No Man is wicked for nothing. And *honour* for their lying they could not expect, in regard that all kind of dignities and promotions were then in the hands of the *Pagans* or *Jews*, from whom they received nothing but reproach and ignominy. Neither could they hope for any *Wealth* and *Riches*, because this profession was oftentimes punished with the loss of goods and possessions: or if it was not; yet the *Gospel* could not be taught by them, unless they omitted or neglected all care about worldly goods. Neither could the hope of any other *worldly advantage* move them to utter untruths; seeing that the very preaching of the *Gospel* did expose them to labours, hunger, thirst, stripes, and imprisonments.

To get *credit* and reputation only among their own Country-men was not so much worth, that they poor simple Men, whose life and doctrine was abhorrent from all pride, should therefore run upon so great inconveniences. Neither again could they have any hope their doctrine would make such progress, as to win them any fame; being opposed both by the nature of Man, which is intent to its own advantage, and by the authority of them, who then every where governed, unless they had been some way animated and incouraged by the *promise of God*.

To which we may add, that they had no reason to promise themselves, that this fame, such as it might prove, would be durable: since they expected (God on purpose concealing his counsel in this matter) the end of the whole World as nearly approaching; which both their own Writings, and the writings of those Christians

that

that followed them, make moſt evident. It remains therefore that we ſay, if they did lye, it was for the defence of their Religion; which cannot with any reaſon be laid to their charge, if the thing be rightly conſidered. For either they did ſincerely believe that this *Religion* which they profeſſed was the *true Religion*, or elſe they were of a contrary mind. If they did not believe it to be *true*; nay if they thought not that it was abſolutely the beſt, they would never have made choice hereof, and refuſed other *Religions* far more ſafe and commodious. Nay further, though they conceived it to be *true*, yet they would not have profeſſed it, unleſs they had been fully perſwaded, that the profeſſion thereof was *neceſſary*; ſpecially, for that they might have eaſily foreſeen, and partly they could tell by experience what troops of Men would be expoſed to death for this *profeſſion*, which without juſt cauſe to occaſion was no better than plain robbery or murder.

But if we ſay, they believed that this *Religion* was true, and the very beſt, and by all means to be profeſſed, and that after the death of their *Lord and Maſter*: ſurely, that could no way be ſo, if their Maſters promiſe concerning his Reſurrection had deceived them, and not proved true. For that had been enough to make any Man in his wits disbelieve, even that which he had already entertained.

Moreover all Religions, and Chriſtianity more than any other, forbids lying in bearing falſe witneſs, eſpecially in divine things: wherefore they could not for the love of *Religion*, and that ſuch a Religion, be induced to tell untruths. Beſides, theſe Men were of an upright converſation; their life was ſpotleſs and unblameable even in the judg-

to find wt follow him 15 beaves backwards

keeping riches is accompanied with a kind of bondage and anxiety, which spoils that very pleasure, which is expected from riches. Whereas those things that nature is content withal, are both few and easily acquired, without much labour or charge: yet if *God* bestow any *overplus* upon us, so that we have somewhat to spare, we are not commanded to cast the same into the *Sea*, as some *Philosophers* unadvisedly have done; neither must we keep it unprofitably, or lavish it out wastfully; but rather therewith we ought to supply the wants and exigencies of other Men, either by giving, or by lending to *them* that would borrow: as becomes those that look upon themselves not as *Lords* and *Masters* of the things they enjoy, but as *Stewards* and *Dispensers* under *God Almighty*, the *Father* and *Master* of all: knowing also that a benefit well bestowed is a treasure full of good hope; which neither the wickedness of Thieves, nor the variety of casualties can in the least diminish.

A rare example of which true and unfeigned *liberality* we find in the primitive *Christians*, who sent relief as far as from *Macedonia* and *Achaia* to the poor that lived in *Palestine*; as if the whole World had been but one Family. And here in the Law of *Christ* this caution is added, that the hope of being paid again, or getting credit by it, do not deflowr our bounty; whose beauty and grace is quite lost with God, if it have respect to any thing but him. And that no Man may pretend for a cloak of his covetousness, that he fears he may have need of all that he hath, when he grows old, or falls into any calamity; the Law promises a special care of such Men as observe these Precepts. And to work a greater

confidence in them, puts them in mind of the conſpicuous Providence of God in feeding the wild Beaſts and Cattle; and in adorning the Herbs and Flowres; and repreſents withal what an unworthy thing it would be, if we ſhould not believe ſo Good and ſo Powerful a God: but deal with Him, as if he were a bad Creditor; whom we will not truſt any further, than while we have a Pawn or pledge in our hands for our ſecurity.

SECT. XVII.

Of Swearing.

THERE are other *Laws* that forbid *Perjury*, but this Law of *Chriſt* will have us to refrain alſo from all kind of *ſwearing*, unleſs we be lawfully called thereunto upon neceſſity. Nay, enjoyns ſuch faithfulneſs and ſincerity in all our words, that there may be no need to exact an Oath of us.

SECT. XVIII.

Of other Matters.

MOreover there can nothing be found *commendable* and praiſe-worthy, either in the *Philoſophical* writings of the *Grecians*, or in the ſayings of the *Hebrews*, and other Nations, which is not contained in the *Precepts* of *Chriſtianity*,

anity, and that also established by Divine authority: as namely, concerning modesty, temperance, goodness, decent behaviour, prudence, the office of Magistrates and Subjects, Parents and Children, Masters and Servants, Man and Wife between themselves; and chiefly the eschewing those *vices* which among many of the *Grecians* and *Romans* went under the name and colour of *honesty*; such were the *desires* of honours and glory. And to be short, admirable is the *substantial brevity* of these *precepts*, comprehended in these few words, that we ought to *love God* above all things, and our *Neighbours* as our selves, that is, we must do as we would be done unto.

SECT. XIX.

Answer to an Objection touching the Controversies abounding among Christians.

BUT here peradventure some will object against this, which we speak concerning the *excellency* of *Christianity*, and tell us of the great diversity of opinions amongst *Christians*, whereupon there have sprung so many *sects* and *factions* as do now abound in the *Church*.

For answer whereunto, we may observe that the like *diversity* of opinions happens almost in all kind of *Arts* and *Sciences*, to wit, partly through the weakness of humane apprehension, and partly because Man's judgment is hindred and intangled by his affections. Howbeit this variety of opinions is contained within certain

bounds and limits: for there are some *common principles* agreed upon by all, and whereupon they ground their doubts. Thus in *Mathematicks* 'tis questioned, *whether a circle may be made quadrangular*: but not whether after the taking away of equal parts from equal, the residue will not remain equal. The same may be seen in *natural Philosophy*, also in the *Art* of *Physick*, and in other Disciplines. In like manner the *difference* of opinions that is amongst *Christians* doth not hinder the common consent and agreement in those *fundamental principles*, for which chiefly we have commended *Christian Religion*; the certainty whereof appears in this, namely, that those which out of mutual and deadly hatred sought all the occasion and matter of contention they could, durst not for all that proceed so far, as to deny that these *Precepts* were commanded by *Christ*: no not even those that refuse to frame their lives and actions according to that rule.

But if there be any Man that will contradict these Principles, he is to be accounted like to those *Philosophers* that denyed *the Snow to be white*: For as these are confuted by sense, so are those convinced by the unanimous consent of all *Christian* Nations, and of the Books which were written by the first Christians, and by those next to the first, and by the Doctors which followed afterward; even those that witnessed their *faith* in *Christ* by their death. For in the opinion of any indifferent *Judge*, that must needs be reputed the *true doctrine* of *Christ*, which so many have successively acknowledged and professed; like as we are perswaded that was the doctrine of *Socrates* which we read in *Plato* and *Xenophon*; as also that of *Zeno* the Philosopher, which we find held by the *Stoicks*.

SECT.

SECT. XX.

The excellency of Christian Religion is further proved from the dignity of the Author.

THE third thing wherein we said *Christian Religion* excelled all others that are, or can be devised, was the *manner* whereby it was delivered and divulged. Where first we shall speak of the *Author*.

They that were authors of the wisdom among the *Grecians*, confessed that they could not affirm almost any thing for certain in their *doctrine*, because (quoth they) *truth lies hid in a deep Pit*; and our minds are no less *dazled* in the contemplation of divine things, than the eyes of an Owl in beholding the bright shining of the *Sun*: Besides, there was none among them but was notoriously guilty of *some vice* or other. For some were flatterers of *Princes*, others addicted to the impure love of Boys or Harlots; others gloried in a Dog-like impudence. And that they all envied one another, their scolding about words or matters of no moment is a great argument; as this is of their coldness in the worship of God, that even they who believed one God, set him aside, and not only worshipped others, but such as they knew were no *Gods*; making that only the *rule* of their *Religion* which was commonly received and practised in publick. Touching *the reward* of *godliness* they determined nothing for certain, as appears by the last (farewel) disputation of *Socrates* at his death.

Mahomet, the Author of a Religion that is spred very far, his own Followers do not deny, to have been a Man that abandoned himself to lust, throughout his whole life: But gave no assurance at all, by which Men may be satisfied, that there shall indeed be such a reward as he promised; consisting in banqueting and in venery; since they do not so much as pretend that his Body was raised to life again, but it lies buried at *Medina* to this day.

And as for *Moses* the Founder of the *Hebrew* Law, though he was an excellent Person, yet he cannot be freed from all blame: since he could scarcely be perswaded with much reluctance to undertake the Embassy, which God charged him withal to the King of *Egypt*: and expressed also some distrust of *God*'s promise for bringing water out of the Rock, as the *Hebrews* themselves confess. And he did scarce partake of any one of those *promises* which by the Law he made unto the People, but was perplexed with continual mutinies and seditions in the Wilderness; neither was he permitted to enter into that blessed and pleasant Land, so much desired.

But *Christ* is described by his Disciples, as a Person without all sin; nor did others ever produce any testimony to prove that He was guilty of the least: but whatsoever He prescribed to others, He performed Himself. For there was nothing that God gave Him in charge, which he did not faithfully perform; being most simple and void of guile in his whole life; most patient of injuries, nay, of cruel torments, as He shewed in suffering even the punishment of the Cross; most loving and kind to all Men, even to his Enemies; yea, those Enemies who put Him to death:

on

on whom he had such compassion that he beseech-ed God to forgive them.

As for the *reward* which he promised unto his Disciples, it is both said, and proved by undoubted arguments, that He himself is made partaker thereof after a most eminent and excellent manner. For after *he* was *risen* from the dead, there were many that beheld, and heard, and handled, and felt *Him*: He also ascended up into *Heaven* in the sight of his *Twelve Disciples*; where He obtained the highest *power*, as was evident in that according to his *promise* made at his departure, he endued them that were his *Followers* with ability to speak those Languages which they had never learnt, and with other wonder-working Powers: which will not let us doubt, either of his faithfulness, nor of his Power to bestow upon us the reward which he hath promised. And thus we have shewn how that this *Religion* is more excellent than others, in regard that *Christ* the Author of it hath *himself* performed what he commanded; as also in his *own person* obtained, and already enjoyeth the *happiness* that he promised.

SECT. XXI.

Also from the wonderful spreading of this Religion.

LET us in the next place descend to the *effects* of this *doctrine* brought by him to the World: which, if they be well weighed, will appear to be such, that if God have any care of humane

affairs, this doctrine cannot but be believed to be Divine. It was very agreeable to Divine Providence, to make that which was beſt, to be of the greateſt and largeſt extent. Now ſuch was the ſucceſs of the Chriſtian Religion; which, we ſee publiſht and taught through all *Europe*, not excepting the moſt Northern Provinces: and no leſs through all *Aſia*, even the Iſlands of it in the Sea: through *Egypt* alſo and *Æthiopia*, and ſome other parts of *Africa*: And laſtly, through *America*. Nor is this only done now, but was ſo anciently, as is witneſſed by the *Hiſtories* of all times, by the Books of *Chriſtians*, the acts of *Synods*, and by that old Tradition at this day preſerved among the *Barbarians* concerning the Travels and Miracles of *Thomas*, *Andrew*, and other *Apoſtles*. *Clemens*, *Tertullian*, and ſome *Ancients* beſides, have noted how far the *name* of *Chriſt* was known amongſt the *Britains*, *Germans*, and other moſt remote Nations in their times. And certainly there is no other *Religion* comparable hereunto for ample and large extent. *Paganiſm* indeed is one name, but cannot be ſaid to be *one Religion*; ſince that it was neither agreed upon by the *Profeſſors* thereof what *one thing* they ſhould *worſhip*; but ſome adored the *Stars*, others the *Elements*, and a third ſort reverenced their *Cattel*, others ſuch things as have no *ſubſiſtence:* Nor was this worſhip performed by vertue of the ſame Law, nor from any common Maſter.

The *Jews* indeed are diſperſed and ſcattered up and down, yet remain one *people*. Howbeit their *Religion* had never any notable growth or increaſe after *Chriſt*'s Aſcenſion; and their *Law* was not ſo much made known by them, as by *Chriſtians*. Then

Then for *Mahumetanism*, it is possessed of Land enough, but 'tis not alone: for *Christian Religion* is also professed in the same Countries; where, in some places there are greater numbers of Christians than of *Turks*: who, on the contrary, are not to be found at all, in most parts where Christianity is planted.

SECT. XXII.

Considering the meekness and simplicity of them that first taught this Religion.

IT follows that we consider by what means this *Christian Religion* had its augmentation and increase, that *therein* it may be comparable, and preferred before others. We see it commonly true of most Men, that they will easily follow the *examples* of Kings and Potentates what way soever they go; specially if *Law* and Penalties compel them to it. Hereby were the *Religions* of the *Pagans*, and of *Mahomet* propagated. But *they* that first taught the *Christian Religion* not only wanted all civil power and authority, but were of *mean* condition, no better than poor Fishermen, Weavers, and the like. Yet by such Mens pains and industry, *that doctrine*, within the space of Thirty Years, or thereabouts, was published not only throughout all the parts of the *Roman Empire*, but also among the *Parthians* and remote *Indians*.

Nor was it thus only in the beginning; but for almost *three* whole Ages together, this Religion was so promoted by the endeavours of private

vate Men; without any threatnings; without any worldly thing to invite Men to it; yea, againſt the will and the moſt violent oppoſition of thoſe who then had the Imperial Power; that before *Conſtantine* profeſſed Chriſtianity, this was become, very near, the greateſt part of the *Roman* World.

Amongſt the *Grecians* that taught morality, divers there were that commended themſelves alſo very much by their skill in other Arts. As the *Platoniſts* were famous for the ſtudy of *Geometry*, the *Peripateticks* for the Hiſtory of *Plants* and living Creatures, the *Stoicks* for *Logical* ſubtilty, the *Pythagoreans* for knowledge of *numbers* and *harmony*: many alſo were admirable for *eloquence*, as *Xenophon*, *Plato*, and *Theophraſtus*. But the firſt *Doctors* and Teachers of *Chriſtianity* were endued with no ſuch *art*, but uſed the plaineſt *language*, without inticing words; only after a bare manner or naked form of ſpeech *pronouncing* their precepts, promiſes, and threatnings. Which having no efficacy in themſelves proportionable to ſuch a progreſs as Chriſtianity made, we muſt needs confeſs, it was either attended by Miracles, or by *God*'s ſecret *power* aſſiſting the buſineſs, or *both* together.

SECT.

SECT. XXIII.

What great impediments there were that might terrifie Men from the embracing or the professing hereof.

HEreunto may be added another thing considerable, namely, that they who received Christianity from those Teachers had not their minds void of a certain form and rule of Religion; and so were not by that means ductile and easie to be drawn, as they were who first received the *Paganish* worship and *Mahomet*'s Law: much less was their minds prepared for it, by some antecedent institution; as the *Hebrews* by Circumcision, and the knowledge of one God, were made fit to accept the Law of *Moses*: But quite contrary were filled with Opinions and Customs, which are a kind of another nature, repugnant to those new Institutions; being educated, *viz.* and confirmed by the authority of Laws and of their Parents, in the *Paganish* Religion, or the *Jewish* Rites.

Besides this, there was another *impediment*, to wit, the most grievous evils, which they who undertook Christianity, must expect to suffer, or had reason to fear, upon that account. For seeing that humane nature abhors such *evils*, it must needs follow that the *causes* of those *evils* cannot be admitted of without much difficulty. A long time were the *Christians* deprived of all honours and dignities; and likewise much afflicted with divers penalties, with confiscation of goods and banishments: which notwithstanding were

were all but *flea-bitings*, for they were condemned to dig in the Mines; and to suffer torments, than which more cruel could not be devised.

And such multitudes of them were put to death, that there never was a greater number of Men at one time swept away and devoured, either by *famine*, or *pestilence*, or *war*, as the *writers* of those times do testifie. Their manner and kind of death also was not *ordinary*, but some were buried alive; others crucified; others endured punishments of the like kind, which cannot be read or thought of without the greatest horror: and yet this savage cruelty, which continued without much intermission (and that not every where) till almost the time of *Constantine*, in the *Roman* World, and in other places endured longer; was so far from diminishing the number of Christians; that quite contrary, their Blood might be called the Seed of the Church: there sprang up still so many, in the room of those that were cut off.

Now let us herein also compare other Religions with Christianity. The *Greeks* and the rest of the *Pagans*, who are wont to magnifie their own things above measure; yet give us in but a very short Catalogue of such as suffered death for the sake of their Doctrine. Some *Gymnosophists*, *Socrates*, not many more, are all they can number. And in those eminent Men, it can scarce be denied, but that there might be some desire of transmitting their fame to Posterity, which had a hand in the business. But amongst those *Christians* that suffered *martyrdom* for their *faith*, there were very many of mean rank, of the common sort of People, such as were scarce ever taken

taken notice of, or known to their Neighbours that lived hard by them. There were Women also, Virgins, and young Men; such as had no desire, nor any probable hope of getting renown in future times by their sufferings: According as in the Books of *Martyrs*, we find the Names but of a few in comparison of the whole *number* of those that were put to death, who are only registred *in gross*.

To which we must add, that by a small compliance and simulation, suppose by casting a little Frankincense upon the Altar, most of them might have freed themselves from such punishments. Which cannot be said of those Philosophers; who, whatsoever they might think secretly in their hearts, in all their apparent actions, conform'd themselves to the vulgar customes. So that, to have suffered death for the honour of God, cannot well be attributed to any other, but only the *Jews* and Christians. And not to the *Jews* neither, after the times of *Christ*; nor before them, but to a few, if they be compared with Christians. More of which suffered for the Law of *Christ* in some one Province; than the *Jews* ever did; whose patience in this kind, may all very near be reduced to the times of *Manasses*, and of *Antiochus*.

Wherefore, seeing Christian Religion in this particular also so vastly excells all other, it ought justly to be preferred before them. And from such a multitude of all kinds, and sexes of People, distinguished by so many several places and ages, as did not stick to dye for this Religion; we may well gather, there was very great cause of such constancy: which cannot be imagined to be

any

any other; but the Light of Truth, and the Spirit of GOD.

SECT. XXIV.

Answer to them that require more forcible Reasons.

FInally, if any yet be not satisfied with these *arguments* aboveſaid, but desire more forcible *reasons* for confirmation of the *Christian Religion*; let such know, that according as things are divers, they must also have divers kinds of Proofs. Thus is there one way in *Mathematicks*, another in *Physicks*, a third in matters of advice and counsel, and lastly another kind, when a *matter of fact* is in question: wherein verily we must rest content when the *testimonies* are free from all suspicion of untruth. Otherwise down goes not only all the use of *history*, and a great part of the *art* of *Physick*, but all the piety also that ought to be between Parents and Children, which cannot be known other ways. And indeed it is the pleasure of *Almighty God* that those things which he would have us to *believe* (so that the very belief thereof may be imputed to us for obedience) should not so evidently *appear*, as those things which are apprehended by *sense* and plain *demonstration*; but only be so far forth *revealed* as may beget *faith*, and a perswasion thereof in the hearts and minds of such as are not *obstinate*: That so the Word of the *Gospel* may be as a *touchstone*, whereby Mens dispositions may be tried whether they be curable or not. For seeing

seeing these *arguments*, whereof we have spoken, have induced so many honest, godly, and wise Men to approve of this *Religion*, it is thereby plain enough that the fault of other Mens *infidelity* is not for want of sufficient *testimony*, but because they would not have *that* to be had and embraced for *truth*, which is contrary to their affections and desires: It being, that is, an hard matter for them to make no great account of honours, and other worldly advantages; which they must do, if they receive what Christ hath taught, and so become ingaged to observe his Precepts. Which is discovered to be true by this very thing; that they take many other Historical Narrations to be true; which notwithstanding appear to be so meerly by authority: and not by any such foot-steps of them remaining at this day, as the History of *Christ* hath; partly in the confession of the *Jews*, who are now in being, and partly in those things, which are every where found in the Assemblies of Christian People; of which it must needs be granted there was some cause.

Lastly, seeing the long *duration* or continuance of *Christian Religion*, and the *large extent* thereof can be ascribed to no *humane power*, therefore it must be attributed to *miracles*: or if any deny that it came to pass through a *miraculous* manner; this very getting so great strength and power without a *miracle*, may be justly thought to surpass any *miracle*.

The

The THIRD Book OF THE TRUTH OF Christian Religion.

SECT. I.

To prove the Authority of the Books of the New Covenant.

AFTER that a Man is once perſwaded by the *reaſons* aboveſaid, or is induced by any other *arguments* to believe that this *Religion* which *Chriſtians* profeſs is the *trueſt*, and abſolutely the *beſt*; if he deſire to learn all the parts thereof, then muſt he have recourſe unto the moſt *ancient writings* that contain the ſame *Religion*, which commonly we call the Books of the *New* Teſtament, or rather new *Covenant*.

For he is very unreaſonable, who denies this Religion to be contained in thoſe Books, as all Chriſtians affirm. Since it is but equity to believe

every Sect; be it good, or be it bad; when it says its opinions are to be found in such or such a Book: as we believe the *Mahometans*, that the Religion of *Mahomet* is contained in the *Alcoran*.

Forasmuch then as we have before proved that the *Christian Religion* is most *true*; and it is manifest withal that it is contained in these Books, if there were no other ground, yet this alone is sufficient to prove and avouch the *Authority* of those Books.

But if any body requires a more particular demonstration of it, I must first lay down this Rule, which all indifferent Judges will allow; that it is incumbent upon him, who will impugn the authority of any writing received for many Ages, to produce Arguments which prove that Writing to be false: which if he cannot do, that Book is to be defended, as in possession of its Authority.

SECT. II.

Here is shewn that such Books were written by the Authors, whose names they have prefixed.

WE say then that those Books which are not in question amongst *Christians*, and carry before them a certain Name, are the very *Works* of those Authors whose names they bear; Because those *primitive Fathers*, *Justin*, *Irenæus*, *Clemens*, and others after them do quote

quote those Books under these very names. As also because *Tertullian* witnesseth that there were *Original Copies* of some of those *Books* extant in his time. And besides, all the *Churches* received those Books for *authentical*, before there were any common publick Meetings. Neither did ever the *Pagans* or *Jews* raise any controversie about this, as if these were not the works of those Men, whose they were said to be: but *Julian* himself plainly confesseth that those were the writings of *Peter* and *Paul*, *Matthew*, *Mark*, and *Luke*, which *Christians* under those names have read and received. For as no Man in his wits can doubt that those Writings, which go under the names of *Homer* & *Virgil*, are truly theirs, because the one hath been so long time received among the *Latin*, and the other among the *Greek Authors*: in like manner, it were more absurd to bring the *Authors* of those *Books* in question, which are granted almost by all the *nations* in the world.

SECT. III.

Some Books were anciently doubted of.

IN the Volume of the *New Covenant*, there are some Books indeed now received, which were not so received from the beginning, as the second *Epistle* of St. *Peter*, that of St. *James* and *Jude*, two of St. *John* the Elder, the *Revelation*, and the *Epistle* to the *Hebrews*: Yet this is certain, that they were acknowledged by many Churches; which appears sufficiently from hence, that the ancient Christians use their

Teſtimonies as Sacred: Which makes it credible that ſuch *Churches* as from the beginning had not thoſe Books, either were ignorant of them, or doubtful: Yet afterward when they were better informed touching the ſame, they admitted them into the *Canon* (as we now ſee) according to the example of other *Churches*.

Neither can any good reaſon be given why any Man ſhould counterfeit thoſe Books, ſince there is nothing compriſed in them, neither can ought thence be collected which is not abundantly expreſſed in other *Books* unqueſtioned.

SECT. IV.

The Authority of ſuch Books as have no Titles, is proved from the quality of the Writers.

AND here let no Man miſtruſt the *verity* of the *Epiſtle* to the *Hebrews*, becauſe the Writer of it is unknown; nor doubt of the two *Epiſtles* of S. *John* and the *Revelation*, becauſe ſome Men do queſtion, whether the *Author* of them was *John* the Apoſtle, or ſome *other* of that name? For the *name* is not ſo much to be regarded as the *quality* or *condition* of Writers. Hence it is that we receive many Books of *Hiſtory*, whoſe *Authors* are to us unknown; As that concerning the *Alexandrian* War by *Cæſar*: becauſe we may perceive that whoſoever writ the ſame, lived in thoſe times, and was preſent when the things were done. In like manner it ought

ought to suffice us, that whosoever wrote the *Books* we speak of, both lived in the *primitive* Age, and were endued with *Apostolical* gifts. For if any body will say, that these qualities might be feigned, as the very Names might be in other Writings; he says that which is not credible, *viz.* that they who every where press the study of truth and piety, would for no cause at all make themselves guilty of the crime of forgery: which is not only detestable among all good Men, but by the *Roman Laws* was to be punished with death.

SECT. V.

These Pen-men writ the Truth, because they had certain knowledge of what they writ.

THIS therefore must be allowed, that the *Books* of the *New Covenant* were written by those *Authors*, whose Names they bear, or by such as bear sufficient witness of themselves: To which if we farther add, that they were also well acquainted with the *matters* whereof they wrote, and had no purpose to *lye* or *dissemble*, it will follow that the *things* which they committed to writing were both *certain* and *true*, because every untruth proceeds either from *ignorance*, or from a *wicked desire* to deceive.

As touching *Matthew*, *John*, *Peter* and *Jude*, they were all of the *society* and *fellowship* of those *Twelve* whom *Jesus* did chuse to be *witnesses* of his *Life* and *Doctrine*; so that they could not want notice of those things which they did re-

late. The same may be said of *James*, who was either an *Apostle*, or as some think, the next a-kin to *Jesus*, and by the *Apostles* consecrated *Bishop* of *Hierusalem*. *Paul* also could not erre through lack of *knowledge*, about those Points which he professeth were revealed to him by *Jesus* himself reigning in Heaven; nor could he, or *Luke* either, who was an inseparable companion to him in his travels, be deceived about those things which were done by himself. This *Luke* might easily know the *certainty* of those things which he writ concerning the *life* and *death* of *Jesus*: For he was born in the places next adjoyning to *Palestina*; through which Countrey when he travelled, he saith he spake with such persons as were *eye-witnesses* of the things that were done. For doubtless besides the *Apostles* with whom he had familiarity, there lived many others at that time who had been *cured* by *Jesus*, and had seen him both *before* his Death and *after* his Resurrection.

If we will give credit to *Tacitus* and *Suetonius* in those things which happened a long time before they were born, because we are confident that they diligently enquired into the *truth* thereof; how much more ought we to believe *this Writer*, who saith that he received all the things which he relates from them that had *seen* the same.

It is credibly reported of *Mark*, that he was a constant companion with *Peter*, so that whatsoever he writ are to be lookt upon as dictated by *Peter*, who could not be *ignorant* thereof. Besides, the same things that he writes are almost all extant in the Writings of the *Apostles*. Neither could the *Author* of the *Apocalypse* be deceived or deluded in those *Visions*, which he saith were sent

sent unto him from *Heaven*. Nor he that writ the *Epistle* to the *Hebrews* erre in those things which he professeth, either to be *inspired* into him by the Spirit of *God*, or else *taught* him by the *Apostles*.

SECT. VI.

As also because they would not lye.

THE other reason we spake of to prove the truth of the said Holy Writers, because they had no *will* to tell an untruth, is twisted with that which we handled above, when in general we proved the *truth* of *Christian Religion*, and of the *history* of the Resurrection of *Christ*.

Those that will accuse any Witnesses for the *pravity* of their *will*, must produce something by which it may be thought credible, their will might be diverted from uttering the *truth*: but this cannot be averred of the said *Authors*. For if any do object and say, that they acted in their own cause, and did their own business; we must see why this should be thought *their* cause and interest. Not that they might get any thing by it in this World, or thereby avoid any danger: when for the sake of this profession, they both lost all the goods of this World, and ventured upon all manner of dangers. This therefore was not *their* cause and interest, but only out of reverence to God: which sure doth not perswade Men to lye; especially in such a business, whereupon depends the everlasting Salvation of Mankind.

Such an impious piece of villany we cannot believe they could be guilty of, if we consider either their Doctrines, every where most full of piety; or their life, which was never yet accused of any wicked deed: no not by their greatest Enemies, who objected nothing to them, but their want of learning and unskilfulness; which did not qualifie them sure for inventing falshoods. And indeed, if there had been the least spice, as we speak, of fraud and cheating in them, they would not themselves have recorded their own faults, and preserved the memory of them: as of their all forsaking their Master when he was in danger, and *Peter*'s denial of him three times.

SECT. VII.

A Confirmation of the Fidelity of these Authors from the Miracles which they wrought.

ON the other side *God* himself gave illustrious testimonies of their *Fidelity* by working *wonders*, which either they or their Disciples with great boldness publickly avouched, adding also the names of the *persons*, places, and other circumstances: So that the *truth* or *falshood* of their assertion might easily have been discovered by the *inquisition* of the *Magistrate*.

Amongst which it is worthy our observation, which they have most constantly delivered, both concerning the use of Tongues which they had never learned, among many thousand Men; and

their

their *curing* the *diseases* of the body upon a suddain in the sight of the People. Neither were they any whit dismayed with fear either of the *Jewish Magistrates* of those times, whom they knew to be most maliciously set against them; or of the *Romans*, who were far from having any good will to them, and, they were sure, would lay hold on any thing on which they might ground a charge of their being *inventors* of a new *Religion*: and yet neither *Jews* nor *Pagans*, in the times immediately following, durst ever deny, that *wonders* were wrought by those Men. Yea, the Miracles of *Peter* are mentioned by † *Phlegon* in his Annals, who lived under *Adrian* the *Emperor*. Moreover the *Christians* themselves in those Books that contain a *reason* of their *faith*, which they exhibited to the *Emperors*, to the *Senate*, and to the *Governors*, do relate these things as most manifest and unquestionable *truths*: yea, they openly report that there continued a *wonderful vertue* of working strange effects at their *Sepulchres* for some Ages after their Death; which if it had been *false*, they knew that to their *shame* and *punishment* the *Magistrates* could have confuted it very easily. But there were such multitude of Miracles wrought at the Sepulchres I spoke of, and so many Witnesses of them; that they extorted even from *Porphyry* a confession of it.

SECT.

SECT. VIII.

The Truth of the Writings confirmed from hence, that many things are found there which the event hath proved to be divinely revealed.

THESE things ought to suffice, but there are other Arguments which we may heap upon these, to prove the *truth* and fidelity of these *Authors Writings*. For many things are therein *foretold*, which were *impossible* for Men by their own power to know or bring to pass: yet we see the *truth* thereof wonderfully confirmed by the *event*.

Thus it was *foretold* that this *Religion* should upon a sudden have a large and ample *increase*; that it should *continue* for ever; and though it were rejected by most of the *Jews*, yet should it be imbraced by the *Gentiles* Thus likewise was *foretold* what hatred and spight the *Jews* would bear against them that professed this *Religion*, and what grievous Persecutions they should undergo: The siege also and *destruction* both of *Hierusalem*, and of the *Temple*, together with the miserable *Calamities* of the *Jewish* Nation.

SECT. IX.

As also from God's care in preserving his People from false writings.

BESIDES this, if it be granted that *God* out of his *providence* takes care of humane affairs, specially such as belong to his *honour* and worship; then it cannot be that he should suffer so great a *multitude* of Men, who had no other design but to worship God after a holy manner, to be cheated with lying Books. And forasmuch as since the time that so *many Sects* have sprung up in *Christianity*, there hath not been *one* that received not either *all* or the *most* of those *Books*, (excepting some few that contain no singular matter differing from the rest) it is a great argument that no material thing could be objected against these *writings*; specially since the said *Sects* were so partial and spitefully bent against each other, that what one approved, others rejected, even for this reason, because it was there approved.

SECT. X.

Answer to the Objection, that divers Books were not received by all.

THERE were some indeed, though very few, among those that would be called Christians, who rejected all those Books, which they

they saw contradicted their peculiar Opinions. Such, for instance, as out of hatred of the *Jews* reviled their *God*, the Maker of the World; and the *Law* which he had given them: or on the other side, such as for fear of the evils which Christians were to undergo, chose to lurk and lye hid under the name of *Jews*; who had liberty, without any danger, to profess their Religion. But these very Men were renounced, in those times, by all other Christians throughout the World: when as yet all that differed in their opinions, with the safety of piety, were tolerated, by the order of the Apostles, with great patience. As for the former kind of these adulterate *Christians*, I think they have been sufficiently confuted, both by that which we have said before, when we proved that *there was but one only true God*, the sole framer of the whole World; As also by those very *Books*, which that they might have some semblance of *Christians*, they did admit of, specially the *Gospel* of *Luke*: wherein is evidently shewn that the same *God* whom *Moses* and the *Hebrews* worshipped, was preached by *Christ*. And the other *sort* we shall more fitly *confute*, when we come to oppugn *those* that both are and would be called *Jews*. For the present only this I say, that their impudence is wonderful great, who slight and extenuate the *authority* of *Paul*; seeing there was not one of all the *Apostles*, that founded and taught more *Churches* than he did: and his Miracles were at that time reported to be exceeding numerous, when (as e'rewhile we said) there might easily have been trial, and enquiry made of the *truth* of the matter. If then it be true that he wrought *wonders*, why may we not believe him concern-

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ing his *Heavenly Visions*, and *instruction* received from *Christ* himself? to whom if he was so dear, it cannot be that he should teach any thing inglorious or ingrateful unto *Christ*, as *falsities* or untruths would have been. And as touching that particular, which is the only thing whereof they accuse him, namely his *doctrine* of the liberty and freedom which was purchased for the *Hebrews* from those Rites and Ceremonies that were formerly commanded them by *MOSES*; He had no reason at all to teach it, but only the truth of the thing which he asserted. For he himself was both circumcised, and did also of his own accord observe very many things which the Law enjoyned. And then for the sake of the Christian Religion, he both did more difficult and suffered harder things than the Law required, or could be expected upon the account of the Law; and taught also his *Disciples* to do and suffer the like. Whence it appears that he uttered no flattering or enticing speeches unto his *auditors*; who were taught instead of the *Sabbath*, to keep every *day holy* for divine *worship*, and instead of the little expences which the *Law* required to suffer the loss of all their goods, and in stead of the *bloud* of Beasts, to consecrate their own *bloud* unto *God*. And further, *Paul* himself plainly affirms, that *Peter*, *John*, and *James*, in token of their consent with him, gave him the *right hands* of fellowship: which he never durst have spoken, if it had not been true, because the same Men being then alive might have *convicted* him for a lyar.

These therefore (of whom I have now spoken) being excluded, as scarce deserving the name of Christians; the most manifest consent of so many

many Congregations of Christians, who received these Books; added to what hath been spoken of the Miracles which the Writers of them wrought, and the singular care which God takes about matters of this kind, ought to be sufficient to induce any indifferent Men to give *credit* thereunto: specially considering that they are wont commonly to credit any other Books of *History*, which have no such testimonies; unless they see some plain reason to the contrary, which cannot be said of any of those Books whereof we have spoken.

SECT. XI.

Answer to an Objection, that these Books seem to contain things impossible.

FOR if any body say, that some things are related in these Books, which are impossible to be done; the Objection vanishes, when we consider what hath been before discoursed: that there are things which cannot indeed be done by Men, but are possible with God (such, that is, as include in themselves no repugnancy or contradiction, as we speak) and that in the number of such things, are even those Miraculous Powers which we most of all admire, and the recalling of the Dead to Life again.

SECT.

SECT. XII.

Or things contrary to Reason.

NEITHER are they to be more regarded, who say that some *doctrines* are comprised in these *Books* which are disagreeing to right *reason*: For this is confuted first by such a vast multitude of Men who wanted no wit, learning or wisdom, as have followed the authority of these Books, ever since the first times. And then all those things which were shewn in the first Book to be consonant to right reason; for instance, *that there is one God*, who alone is absolutely *perfect*, *infinite* in vertue, life, wisdom, and goodness, of whom all things that have any being were *made*: whose care and providence reacheth over all his works, especially unto Men; and who can after this life bountifully reward all them that obey him: and that we ought to bridle our sensual appetites: that amongst Men there is *kindred* and alliance, and therefore they ought to love one another with sincere affection: All these you shall find most plainly delivered in these Books. But to assert any thing for certain beyond these, either about the nature of God, or about his will, by the mere conduct of humane reason, the contrary resolutions, not only of the Schools among themselves, but of particular Philosophers, may teach us how unsafe and fallacious it is.

And it is no marvel: for if Men do so far disagree in their opinions, when they dispute about the nature of their own *Soul*, then they must

must needs much more dissent, when they go about to determine any thing not revealed concerning the *highest mind*, and the most supreme *Spirit* which so far transcends our weak apprehension. If (as prudent Men are wont to say) to enquire into the *Counsels* of Kings be *dangerous*, and not to be attempted or *attained* by us; who then is there so sagacious, that he should hope to be able by his own conjecture to find out what God's will is in those things, which he may will freely as he pleases? Wherefore *Plato* said very well, that none of these hidden *mysteries* could be known without an *Oracle*. Now there can no *Oracle* be proved to be an *Oracle* indeed by any clearer *testimonies* than those that are contained in the said *Books* of the *new covenant*. It is so far from being proved, that it is not so much as asserted, that God did ever reveal any thing to Men concerning his *nature*, which was repugnant to these Books: Nor can there any later signification of his *will*, which is credible, be produced. For if there was any thing otherwise commanded or permitted before the times of *Christ*, in such matters as are either plainly indifferent, or not at all in themselves due, nor plainly dishonest, it makes nothing against these Books; since that in such matters the later Laws annul the former.

SECT.

SECT. XIII.

Answer to an Objection, that some of these Books are repugnant to the other.

THERE are those who are wont further to object against these Books, that there is sometime a certain disagreement in their sense. But, quite contrary, whosoever will judge of this matter with an indifferent mind, shall find this also may be added to the arguments for the authority of these Books, that they do most manifestly and apparently *agree* about such things as concern any weighty point of *doctrine* or *history*: Which *consent* and accord cannot elsewhere be found among any other *Writers* that are of one and the same *sect* or *profession*, whether we consider the *Jews* or the *Greek Philosophers*, the *Physicians* or the *Roman Lawyers*. All which do not only *differ* much among themselves, yea, even those that are of the same *sect*, as *Plato* and *Xenophon*; but oftentimes one shall find the same *Writer* to affirm now one thing, then another, as if he were *forgetful* of himself, or knew not what to resolve upon. But these *Writers*, of whom we speak, do inculcate and express the same points of *faith*; they deliver the same *Commandments*; and as for their *narration* of the life, and death, and resurrection of *Christ*, the Sum and *substance* in them all is the very same.

As touching some small circumstances, which make nothing to the main matter, they might happily have admitted a very easie reconcilia-

tion; though we now do not know it, becauſe of the likeneſs of things done at divers times, the ambiguity of names, or more names than one of the ſame Man or place, and ſuch like things. Nay this very thing ought to vindicate and free theſe *Writers* from all ſuſpicion of *falſhood*; it being uſual with thoſe that would have lies and untruths credited, to relate all *circumſtances* by compact and agreement, ſo as there ſhall not appear any colour or ſhew of *difference*. Or if it be ſo, that for any ſmall *difference*, which cannot ſo exactly be reconciled, a whole Book ſhall loſe its credit; then we muſt believe no *Books* at all, ſpecially thoſe of *hiſtory*: yet we ſee that *Polybius*, *Halicarnaſſenſis*, *Livy*, and *Plutarch*, for the *ſubſtance* of them are eſteemed *authentical* and *true*, though in ſome *circumſtances* they do not agree: Which makes it the more equal and juſt, that no ſuch thing ſhould deſtroy their credit, who we ſee by their very Writings were always moſt ſtudious of Piety and Truth.

SECT. XIV.

Anſwer to an Objection, taken from outward Teſtimonies, which make more for theſe Books.

THERE remains another way of overthrowing a Teſtimony, which is by producing contrary Teſtimonies out of other Authors.

But

But I dare boldly say, that there are no such *testimonies* to be found, unless a Man will produce the *sayings* of them that were *born* a long time after, and of such also as did so openly profess *enmity* against *Christianity*, that they could be no fit *Witnesses* in this matter.

Nay, on the contrary, if need were, we could alledge many *testimonies* to confirm divers parts of the *history* which is delivered in the said *Books*. Thus both *Hebrews* and *Pagans* report that *Jesus* was crucified, and that sundry *miracles* were done by him and his *Disciples*. Those most famous Books of *Josephus*, which were set forth about Forty years after *Christ*'s Ascension, do make mention of *Herod*, *Pilat*, *Festus*, *Felix*, *John* the *Baptist*, *Gamaliel*, and of the *destruction* of *Hierusalem* at large. Herewithal agree that which the Authors of the *Talmud* have recorded concerning *those times*. *Tacitus* relates how cruelly *Nero* used the *Christians*. And anciently there were certain *Books* extant, not only of private Men, as of *Phlegon*, and others; but also some publick *Acts*, whereunto the *Christians* appealed, for that in them there was mention made of the *Star* that appeared at *Christ*'s Nativity, and also of the Earthquake and Eclipse of the *Sun* (against the course of Nature, it being then full Moon) at the time of *Christ*'s Passion upon the Cross.

SECT. XV.

Answer to the Objection, that the Scriptures were changed.

NOW what can be farther objected against these Books, I see not, unless it be said that they remained not altogether *the same* that they were from the beginning. And indeed it must be granted that what is *common* to other Books might happen, nay did happen to *those*; namely, that by the carelesness, or the perverse care of the *Transcribers*, some Letters, syllables or words might be changed, left out, or added. But it is an *unjust thing* to bring in question the *truth* of such a *Book* or *evidence* only, because in so many *ages* there could not but be great variety of *Copies*, since both custome and reason requires that what appears in the most, and most ancient Copies, be preferred to the rest. But that either by fraud or any other way, all the Copies were corrupted, and that in point of doctrine, or some remarkable piece of history, will never be proved: for there are neither any evidences, nor any witnesses of those times, which attest it. But if, as was said before, there be any thing urged, in much later times, by those who bare an implacable hatred to the Disciples of these Books; that ought to be lookt upon as a Reproach, not as a Testimony.

And this truly, which we have said, may be well thought a sufficient Answer to those, who object a change in the Scripture; for he who affirms that, especially against a writing which hath

hath been long, and in abundance of places, received, ought himself to prove his charge. But to make the vanity of this Objection more fully appear, we will shew, that what they feign, neither was, nor could be done.

We have proved before, that the Books were written by the Authors whose Names they bear: which being granted, it follows that other Books were not foisted into their room, nor was any notable part of them changed. For since that change must needs have some design, that part would notoriously differ from the other parts and Books, which were not changed: which cannot now any where be discerned; nay, there is an admirable agreement, as we said, in their Senses.

Besides, as soon as any of the Apostles, or Apostolical Men published any thing; there is no doubt to be made, but Christians with great diligence (as became their piety, and care to preserve and propagate truth to Posterity) took from thence many Copies for their use. Which therefore were dispersed, as far as the Christian Name; through *Europe*, *Asia* and *Egypt*, in which Places the *Greek* Language was spoken.

And more than this, the Original Copies also, as we said before, were preserved till Two Hundred Years after *Christ*. Now it was not possible that any Book diffused into so many Copies, and kept not only by the private diligence of particular Persons, but the common care of the Churches; should be altered by the hand of any falsifier. Add further, that these Books in the following ages were translated into the *Syriac*, *Ethiopick*, *Arabick*, and *Latin* Tongues: which *translations* are yet extant; and do not differ in

any thing of moment from the *Greek Copies* themselves.

Besides, we have the *Writings* of those Men, who were taught by the *Apostles* themselves, or by their *Disciples*, wherein many places are cited out of these *Books* to the same sense and meaning, which now we read them. Neither was there any in the *Church* of so great *authority* in those times, as to have met with obedience, if he would have changed any thing: As is plain enough by the free and open dissent of *Irenæus*, *Tertullian*, and *Cyprian*, from those that were most eminent in the *Church*. After which times there succeeded many *other men*, of great Learning and Judgment, who having first made diligent inquiry thereof, received these *Books*, as retaining their *original* purity. Hitherto also may be referred what but now we said of divers *sects* of *Christians*; all which, at least such as acknowledged, God to be the Maker of the World, and Christ to be the Author of a new Law, did receive and use these *Books* accordingly as we do the same. And if any had attempted to *alter*, or put any thing new into any part thereof, they should have been accused by the rest for *forgery* and *false-dealing* therein. Neither was there ever any *Sect* that had the liberty at their pleasure to *alter* any of these *Books* for their own turns; For it is manifest that all of them did draw their *arguments* one against another, out of the same. And as for that which we touched concerning *divine providence*, it belongs no less unto the *chiefest parts*, than unto the *whole Books*; namely, that it is not agreeable to it, that *GOD* should suffer so many *Thousand Men*, which sincerely desired to be *godly*, and earnestly sought after *eternal life*, to be

be led headlong into that *error* which they could no way *avoid*. And thus much shall suffice to be spoken for the *authority* of the *Books* of the *new covenant*, whence alone, if there were no other helps, we might be sufficiently instructed concerning the *true Religion*.

SECT. XVI.

For the Authority of the Books of the Old Testament.

NOW forasmuch as it hath pleased *God* to leave us also the *writings* and *evidences* of the *Jewish Religion*, which was anciently the true, and affords no small *testimonies* for *Christianity*; Therefore it will not be amiss, in the next place, to justifie the *authority* of the same. First then, that these *Books* were written by the same Men, whose Names they bear, is manifest in like manner, as we have proved of *ours* before, of the *New Covenant*.

These *Authors* were either *Prophets* or other very *faithful* and *credible men*, such as was *Esdras*, who is thought to have collected the *Books* of the Old *Testament* into one Volume, during the life time of the Prophet *Haggai*, *Malachi*, and *Zachary*. I will not here repeat again what is said before in the *commendation* of *Moses*. Both that part of *history*, which at first was delivered by *him*, as we have shewn in the first *Book*; and *that* also which was collected after his time is witnessed even by many of the *Heathen*. Thus the Annals of the *Phœnicians* have recorded

the names of *David* and *Solomon*, and their *Leagues* with the Men of *Tyre*. Aſwel *Beroſus* as the *Hebrew* Writers, makes mention of *Nebuchadonoſor*, and of other *Chaldean* Kings. He whom *Jeremy* calls *Vaphres* King of *Ægypt*, is termed *Apries* by *Herodotus*. In like manner the Books of the *Grecians* are repleniſhed with Narrations concerning *Cyrus* and his Succeſſors, until the times of *Darius*. And many other things concerning the *Nation* of the *Jews* are related by *Joſephus* in his Books againſt *Apion*: whereunto we may add what before we have touched out of *Strabo* and *Trogus*. But as for us *Chriſtians*, we cannot in the leaſt doubt of the truth of theſe Books, out of every one of which almoſt, there are teſtimonies extant in our Books, which are found likewiſe in the *Hebrew*. Neither do we find, when *Chriſt* reprehended many things in the *Doctors* of the *Law* and *Phariſees* of his time, that ever he accus'd them of *forgery* committed againſt the Writings of *Moſes*, or the *Prophets*; or that they uſed counterfeit Books, or ſuch as were changed.

Then after *Chriſt*'s time, it cannot be proved, neither is it credible that the *Scripture* was corrupted in matters of any moment; if we conſider rightly how far and wide over the face of the earth, the Nation of the *Jews* was ſpread, who every where were the keepers of theſe Books. For firſt of all, the Ten Tribes were led away captive by the *Aſſyrians* into *Media*, then afterward the two other Tribes: And many of theſe alſo, after *Cyrus* granted them liberty to return, ſetled themſelves in foreign Countries. The *Macedonians* invited them with great *promiſes* to come into *Alexandria*. The cruelty of *Antiochus*,

Antiochus, the civil Wars of the *Maccabees*, together with those of *Pompey* and *Sossius* from without, did disperse and scatter abroad many of them. The parts of *Africa* about *Cyrene* were full of the *Jews*: so were the Cities of *Asia*, *Macedonia*, *Lycaonia*; and likewise the Isles of *Cyprus*, *Crete*, and others. Also what a number of them there was at *Rome*, may be learned out of *Horace*, *Juvenal*, and *Martial*. Now it is not possible that such Multitudes so far distant one from another, should be *cozened* in this kind; neither could they ever accord all in the coining of an *untruth*. Add moreover, that almost Three Hundred Years before *Christ*, at the appointment and care of the Kings of *Egypt*, those Books of the *Hebrews* were translated into the *Greek* Tongue by those that are called the *Seventy Interpreters*. So as then the *Grecians* had the sense and substance of them, though in another Language; whereby they were the less liable to be changed. Nay more, these *Books* were translated both into the *Chaldee* Tongue, and into that of *Jerusalem*, that is, the half *Syriac*, a little before, and a little after the time of *Christ*. Other *Greek translations* afterward there were, as namely by *Aquila*, *Symmachus* and *Theodotion*; all which *Origen* compared with that of the *Seventy Interpreters*; and after him others also, who could find no diversity of *history*, or of any *matter* worth speaking of.

Philo lived in the Reign of *Caligula*, and *Josephus* survived the times of both the *Vespasians*: which two *Writers* alledge out of the *Hebrew* Books the *same things* that we read at this day.

Now in these very times began *Christian Religion* to be more and more propagated, being pro-

profeſſed by many of the *Hebrews*, and by ſundry Perſons that had learned the *Hebrew* tongue; who if the *Jews* had falſified in any notable part, could have quickly diſcovered it by comparing more ancient *Copies*, and ſo have made it publickly known. But they are ſo far from doing this, that on the other ſide they alledge many *teſtimonies* out of the old *covenant*, to the ſame ſenſe and meaning that they are uſed by the *Hebrews*: which *Hebrews* may ſooner be accuſed of any other fault, than (I will not ſay falſhood, but of ſo much as) negligence about theſe Books; which they have ſo religiouſly and exactly deſcribed and compared, that they know how often any one Letter is found therein.

The laſt though not the leaſt *argument*, to prove that the *Jews* did not purpoſely *corrupt* or *alter* the Scripture, may be, becauſe the *Chriſtians* out of the very *Books* which are read by the *Jews* do evince, and as they truſt very ſtrongly, that their *Lord* and *Maſter Jeſus* is that ſame very *Meſſias* which was anciently *promiſed* to the *Jews* their Forefathers. Which above all things the *Jews* would have taken care ſhould not have been done, when the *controverſie* aroſe between them and the *Chriſtians*, if ever it had been in their power to have *changed* what they liſted.

The

The Fourth Book OF THE TRUTH OF Christian Religion.

SECT. I.

A particular Confutation of the Religions opposite to Christianity.

THE *Fourth* Book beginning with that pleasure, which many Men are wont to take in beholding the danger wherein others are, while they are in none themselves; shews that it ought to be the greatest pleasure of a Christian Man in this life, not only to rejoyce and bless himself that he hath found out the Truth, but to lend his help also to others that wander up and down in the Labyrinths of Errour; and to make them partakers of so great a benefit.

Which we in some measure have indeavoured to do in the former Books: (the demonstration of

of that which is true, containing in it self the confutation of what is false) yet in regard that all kinds of Religions, which oppose themselves to the Christian, viz. *Paganism*, *Judaism* and *Mahometism*; besides that which is common to all, have certain errors proper to every one of them, and their peculiar Arguments which they are wont to oppose us withal; it will not be amiss to make a particular Disputation against every one of these: First, beseeching the Readers to free their judgments from leaning to a Party, and from long custom and prejudice, (as impediments of a good mind) that with the greater indifferency they may take cognizance of what shall be said.

SECT. II.

And first of Paganism, that there is but one God. Created Spirits are good or bad: the good not to be honoured, but as the most high God directs.

TO begin then against *Pagans*: If they say that there are divers *eternal* and *co-equal Gods*, we have confuted this Opinion before in the first Book, where we taught that *there is but only one God*, who is the cause of all things. Or if they by the name of *Gods*, do understand the created *Spirits* which are superior to Men, they then either mean the *good* or the *bad*: if they say the *good*, first, they ought to be well assured that such are so indeed, otherwise they commit a dangerous

gerous error in receiving enemies in stead of *friends*, and *Traitors* for *Ambassadors*. Then it were but reason that they should in their very worship, make an evident difference, between the most high God, and those Spirits. And likewise be satisfied what order there is among them, what good may be expected from each of them, and what honour the most High is willing should be bestowed on every one of them. All which being wanting in their Religion, it is plain from thence how uncertain that *Religion* is, and how it were a safer course for them to betake themselves to the *worship* of one *Almighty God*; which even *Plato* confessed was the duty of every wise Man, specially for that to whomsoever *God* is propitious and favourable, to them these good *Angels* must needs be serviceable and gracious, being the Ministers and Servants of the most High.

SECT. III.

Evil Spirits adored by Pagans, and how impious a thing it is.

BUT it was the bad not the good *Spirits* which the *Pagans* did *worship*, as may be proved by weighty *reasons*: first, because these *adored Angels* did not throw off their *worshippers* unto the *service* of the *true God*, but as much as in them lay, laboured to *abolish* the same; or at least in every respect required equal *honour* with the *Almighty*. Secondly, because they procured all the mischief they could to the worshippers of the One most High God, by provoking both

both Magistrates and People to inflict punishments upon them. For when it was lawful for *Poets* to sing of the murders and adulteries committed by the *Gods*, and for the *Epicures* to take away all *divine Providence*, and any other *Religion* (though never so different in Rites) was allowed, as the *Egyptian*, the *Phrygian*, the *Grecian*, the *Thuscan*, and the sacred rites of *Rome*; even then generally the *Jews* alone were made *ridiculous*, as appears by *Satyrs* and *Epigrams* written upon them; and sometimes also suffered *banishment*. And as for *Christians* they were *afflicted* with most cruel punishments: no other cause whereof can be given than that both these *Sects* did worship one God, whose *honour* was impeached by the *multitude* of such *Gods* as the *Heathen* adored: who did not so much vie one with another, as with Him.

Thirdly, this was manifest by the manner of their *worship*, which no way beseemed any good and honest *Spirit*; namely, by humane blood, by the running of naked Men in the Temples, by Pageants and dancings, full of nasty filthiness: such as may be seen at this day among some People of *America* and *Africa*, who yet sit in the darkness of *Gentilism*.

Yea, which is more, there both anciently were, and now are People, who worshipt evil Spirits; which they knew and professed to be such: As the *Persians Arimanius*, the *Greeks*, those they called *Cacodæmons*, the Latins their *Vejoves*; and now some *Æthiopians* and *Indians*, such like Deities; than which nothing can be imagined more impious. For what is *Religious worship* but a *testimony* of an infinite *goodness*, that a Man doth acknowledge to be in *him* whom he

he worshippeth? which if it be exhibited unto a bad *Spirit*, it is false and deceitful, implying in it no less crime than *high treason*; forasmuch as the *honour* due unto the King is not only withdrawn from him, but is confer'd upon his enemy, and one that hath traiterously revolted from Him. Moreover, vain is that perswasion which they conceive of *GOD*, that *he is good*, and therefore will not *punish* this offence; because they think so to do, were contrary to his *goodness*. For mercy or *clemency*, that it may be just, hath its bounds and limits: and where *wickedness* abounds beyond measure, there *justice* doth as it were necessarily require the infliction of *punishment*. Neither is it less blameable, that they pretend Fear constrains them to honour wicked Spirits: since He that is perfectly Good, is as communicative also; and therefore the Author of all other Natures, which are his productions. And if he be, then it follows that he hath *absolute* power and dominion over all *creatures* as over his workmanship; so that nothing can be done by *any* of them, which he hath a *desire* to hinder. Which things being certainly true, we may easily gather that evil Spirits can no further do any hurt to him, who hath God, most high and most transcendently good, favourable to him; than that God, for the sake of some good or other, shall think fit to permit.

Nor can a Man obtain any thing of those evil Spirits by his Prayers, which is not to be rejected: because he that is evil is then worst of all, when he feigns himself to be good; and the gifts of Enemies, are meer snares and treacheries.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

Againſt the worſhip, which in Paganiſm is exhibited to Men after their Death.

MOreover there were heretofore and now alſo are *Pagans*, that tell us, they give honour and *worſhip* to the *Souls* of *Men departed*. But firſt they ſhould have here alſo made ſome manifeſt diſtinction between this *honour* and *that* which is *due* unto the moſt high *God*: Then again, all *prayers* made to them are but vain and fruitleſs, unleſs thoſe *Spirits* were able to give us ſomething; of which their worſhippers have no certainty: nor is there any more ground to ſay that they can, than that they cannot. But another thing is worſt of all, to wit, that many of them to whom ſuch *glory* is given by the *Heathen*, in their life time were notoriouſly *wicked*, and addicted to one filthy *vice* or other: Thus *Bacchus* was a drunkard, and *Hercules* effeminate; *Romulus* proved a very villain to his Brother, and *Jupiter* a traytor to his own Father. So that their honour redounds to the diſgrace of the true GOD, and of Vertue which he loves: whilſt Vices which are inticing enough of themſelves, it recommends to Men by Religion.

SECT.

SECT. V.

Against worshipping of Stars and Elements.

OF more antiquity than this was the worshipping of *Stars* and of the *Elements*, as Fire, Water, Air, and Earth; wherein great *ignorance* and *folly* was committed. For *prayers* are the greatest part of *religious worship*, which cannot without folly be directed to any object save to *intelligent natures*: but sense tells us that the *Elements* (as we call them) are no such things. And as for the *Stars*, if any say they are, he will never be able to prove it; since that no such matter can be collected from their operations and *influences* which demonstrate their nature; but rather we may gather the contrary by their *motion*, which is not variable like to that in things indued with *liberty* of will, but *constant* and unalterable. Besides, we have shewn before that the course and motion of the *Stars* is appointed for the use of *men*, whence Man ought to acknowledge himself to be both liker to God than they, in his better part, as also more dear unto him: And therefore much injury should he do to his own worth and dignity, if he submit himself to such things, as God hath given to be *serviceable* unto him: whereas on the contrary he ought rather to *render thanks* for them which cannot do, or it is not proved can do so much for themselves.

SECT. VI.

Againſt worſhipping of Bruit-beaſts.

BUT nothing is ſo unworthy as this, that Men, eſpecially the *Egyptians*, ſunk at length into ſuch a ſottiſhneſs; as to worſhip brute Beaſts. For though, in ſome of them there appears ſome ſhadow, as we may call it, of underſtanding; yet that underſtanding is nothing, if we compare it with Man's. For they can neither expreſs their inward conceptions by diſtinct words, or by writing; nor do works of divers kinds, no nor works of the ſame kind after divers manners: much leſs can they attain to the knowledge of numbers, dimenſions, and the celeſtial motions. Whereas, on the other ſide, Man, by the force and diligence of his wit, catches all manner of Animals, though never ſo ſtrong; whether wild Beaſts, Birds, or Fiſhes: and ſo maſters them, that in ſome meaſure he makes them ſubject to his Laws; as Elephants, Lyons, Horſes and Oxen. Yea, from thoſe which are hurtful, he draws to himſelf ſome profit, as Medicines from Serpents: And hath this uſe and benefit from them all (which is utterly unknown to them) that he contemplates the compoſition of their Bodies, the ſcituation of their parts, and comparing both their ſpecies and their kinds one with another, learns from thence alſo his own dignity; as much as the ſtructure of Man's body is more perfect and noble than that of the reſt. Which things, if any Man rightly conſider, he will be ſo far from conſidering other living Creatures

tures as Gods; that he will rather look upon himself as constituted by the most High God, a kind of God over them.

SECT. VII.

Against worshipping of things that are no substances.

WE find also that the *Grecians*, *Romans*, and others worshipped those things which have no subsistence, but are meer Accidents of other things.

For to omit those *uncouth Deities*, the *Fever*, dame *Impudence*, and the like, let us name the better sort; such were *health*, which is nothing but a right temperature of the parts of the body: *good fortune*, which is an event that is correspondent to a Man's desire: The *affections* also, such as love, fear, anger, hope, and the rest, which proceed from the consideration of something that is good or evil, easie or difficult; are *certain motions* or *passions* in that part of the mind which is united to the body, by the blood especially; not having any absolute power of themselves, but are subordinate *hand-maids* to the commands of the *will*, their *Mistress* at least in their continuance and direction. Then for Vertues, whose Names are divers; *Prudence*, in chusing what is profitable for us; *Fortitude*, in undertaking dangers; *Justice*, in abstaining from that which is another Man's; *Temperance*, in the moderation of pleasures, *&c.* they are certain inclinations and propensions in the mind unto that which is

right, grown up by long exercise and practice. Which as they may be augmented in a Man; so may they by neglect be diminished; nay quite lost and abolished. As for *Honour* (whereunto we read there were Temples dedicated) it is other Mens judgment, or good opinion, concerning one whom they supposed indued with Vertue: which is often bestowed upon bad men, as well as good; by the natural proneness there is in Men to err in their judgment.

These therefore having no subsistence, and therefore not to be compared in dignity, and worth, with things that do subsist; nor having any understanding of Mens prayers or veneration; it is most absurd and unreasonable to worship them as Gods: when for this very thing He is to be worshipped, who can both give and preserve them.

SECT. VIII.

Answer to the Argument of the Gentiles taken from Miracles done among them.

THE *Pagans* for the commendation of their *Religion* are wont to alledge *Miracles*, but *such* as in many things may be excepted against.

For the wisest Men among the *Pagans* rejected many of these, as supported by no testimony of any credible witness; but plainly counterfeit and fabulous. Other Miracles, which they said were done, hapned in some secret place, in the night, before one or two, whose eyes the craft of the Priests might easily delude by false shews

and

and appearances of things. And there are others which raised great admiration, and passed for wonders, meerly because they met with those, who were ignorant of natural things; especially of hidden properties. As for instance, such a thing might happen, if one should draw Iron with the Loadstone, among people who knew nothing of its vertue: in which arts *Simon Magus*, and *Apollonius*, as many have recorded, were very skilful.

I do not deny, but some things greater than these were seen, which by Man's power alone could not be drawn out of natural causes; and yet did not need a power which was truly divine; that is, omnipotent: but might be performed by Spirits that are placed between God and Men. Who by their celerity, efficacy, subtilty and diligence, can easily carry things far distant from one place to another; and compound things that are very different; to the working of such effects, as shall strike Men with astonishment. But that the Spirits, whereby this was effected, were not good, and therefore neither was the Religion good; appears already from what hath been said before. And from hence also, that they said they were compelled to do things, even against their wills, by the power of certain charms: when the wisest of the *Pagans* agree that there can be no such vertue in words; but only a power of perswasion, and that no other way than by their signification.

And it is another token of their wickedness, that they undertook to allure and draw this or that body, though never so backward to it, into the love of such or such a Person. Wherein they were injurious to them; either in their vain

promiſes, or in effecting what they promiſed: for this alſo is forbidden by humane Laws, as a piece of Sorcery. Neither need any Man wonder why God ſuffered ſome *marvels* to be wrought by evil *Spirits* among the *Gentiles*, ſeeing they deſerved to be cheated with ſuch illuſions, who ſo long time had forſaken the worſhip of the *true God*.

Moreover this is an argument of their *weakneſs* and impotency, that their *works* never brought any conſiderable good along with them. For if any ſeemed to be called back to life after they were dead, they did not continue alive; neither could they exerciſe the *functions* of living Creatures. Or if it happened that any thing proceeding happily from a *divine power*, did appear to the *Pagans*; yet the ſame was not foretold ſhould come to paſs for the confirmation of their *Religion*, and therefore there might be other cauſes, and far different reaſons, which the divine efficacy propounded to it ſelf in the doing thoſe things. As for example, if it was true, that *Veſpaſian* reſtored ſight to one blind; this was done, that he being thereby made more venerable, might the more eaſily obtain the *Roman* Empire: to which he was choſen by God, that he might be a Miniſter of his Judgments upon the *Jews*. More ſuch like cauſes there may be of other *wonders*, which had no relation at all to their *Religion*.

SECT.

SECT. IX.

And from Oracles.

THE very same likewise, in a manner, may serve for answer to that which they object concerning *Oracles*; especially what we have said, that these Men did worthily deserve to be *deluded*, for contempt of that *knowledge* which reason or ancient tradition suggested to every one of them. Then again the words of the *Oracles*, for the most part, were *ambiguous*, and might easily receive an interpretation, from any event whatsoever. Or if there was any thing more expresly foretold by them, yet it is not necessary that it should proceed from an *all-knowing mind:* For it was either such a thing as might be foreseen by *natural causes* then existing, as some *Physicians* have foretold Diseases that are a coming; or else some probable conjecture might be made by that which commonly falls out and usually comes to pass, as we read of some *persons* well skill'd in civil affairs, that have made notable guesses at *future events*. Again, suppose that amongst the *Pagans*, *God* sometimes used the *ministery* of some *Prophets* to foretel those things, which could have no certain *cause* besides the *will* of *God*; yet this did not approve or confirm their *heathenish Religion*, but rather overthrew it. Such for instance are those things, in the fourth Eclogue of *Virgil*, taken out of the *Sibyls verses*; where unwittingly the *Poet* gives us a lively description of the coming of *Christ*, and his benefits. So in the same Books of the *Sibyls* it was,

that he ought to be acknowledg'd as King, who ſhould be our King indeed: and that he was to come out of the Eaſt, who ſhould have *dominion* over all. We read in *Porphyry* of the *Oracle* of *Apollo*, which ſaith, that other *Gods* are aerial *Spirits*, but the *God* of the *Hebrews* is only to be worſhipped: which ſaying, if the worſhippers of *Apollo* obey, then they muſt ceaſe to worſhip him: if they do not obey it, then they make their *God* a lyar. Add further, if thoſe *Spirits* had reſpected or intended the good of Mankind, above all things, they would have preſcribed a general Rule of life to Mankind, and alſo given ſome certain aſſurance of a *reward* to them that lived accordingly; neither of which was ever done by them.

On the other ſide oftentimes in their Verſes we find ſome *Kings* commended which were wicked men, ſome *Champions* extol'd and dignified with divine honour; others allured to immodeſt and unlawful love, or to the ſeeking after filthy lucre, or committing of Murder, as might be ſhewn by many Examples.

SECT. X.

Paganiſm decayed of its own accord ſo ſoon as humane aid ceaſed.

BESIDES all that hath hitherto been ſaid, *Paganiſm* miniſters to us a mighty *argument* againſt it ſelf; becauſe that whereſoever it becomes deſtitute of *humane* force to ſupport it, there ſtraightway it comes to *ruine*, as if the *founda-*

foundation thereof were quite overthrown. For if we take a view of all the Kingdoms and States that are among *Christians* or *Mahumetans*, we shall find no memory of *Paganism*, but in *Books*. Nay *histories* tell us, that even in those times, when the Emperors endeavoured to uphold the *Pagan* Religion either by violence and persecution, as did the first of them; or by learning and subtilty, as did *Julian*; it notwithstanding decayed daily, not by any violent opposition, nor by the brightness and splendor of lineage and descent, (for Jesus was accounted by the common sort only a Carpenters Son;) nor by the flourishes of learning, which they that taught the Law of *Christ* used not in their Sermons; nor by gifts and bribes, for they were poor; nor by any soothing and flattering speeches, for on the contrary they taught that all worldly advantages must be despised, and that all kind of adversity must be undergone for the *Gospel*'s sake. See then how weak and impotent *Paganism* was, which by such means came to ruine.

Neither did the *doctrine* of *Christ* only make the credulity of the Gentiles to vanish, but even bad *Spirits* came out of divers bodies at the name of *Christ*: they became *dumb* also, and being demanded the reason of their silence, they were compelled to say, that they were able to do nothing where the name of *Christ* was called upon.

SECT.

SECT. XI.

Answer to the Opinion of some that think the beginning and decay of Religions depend upon the efficacy of the Stars.

THERE have been *Philosophers*, that did ascribe the beginning and decay of every *Religion* unto the Stars: but this star-gazing Science, which these Men profess to be skilled in, is delivered under such different rules, that one can be certain of nothing, but only this, that there is no certainty at all therein.

I do not here speak of such effects as follow from a natural necessity of causes, but of those that proceed from the will of Man, which of it self hath such liberty and freedom, that no *necessity* or violence can be impressed upon it from without. For if the consent of the *will* did necessarily follow any outward impression, then the power in our soul, which we may perceive it hath to consult, deliberate and chuse, would be given in vain. Also the equity of all Laws, of all rewards and punishments would be taken away, seeing there can be neither *fault* nor *merit* in that which is altogether necessary and inevitable.

Again, there are divers evil *acts* or effects of the will, which if they proceeded of any necessity from the *Heavens*, then the same *Heavens* and Celestial Bodies must needs receive such efficacy from *God*, and so it would follow, that *God*, who is most *perfectly good*, is the true cause of that which is *morally evil*; And that when in his *Law* he professeth himself to abhor *wickedness*, which

which a force inserted by him into things themselves will inevitably produce, he doth will two things contrary one to the other; that the same thing should be done and not be done; and also that a Man offends in an action, which he doth by divine instigation.

They speak more probably, that say the *influences* of the *Stars* do first affect the Air, then our Bodies, with such qualities as oftentimes do excite and stir up in the mind some desires or affections answerable thereunto: and the *will* being allured or enticed by these *motions* doth oftentimes yield unto them. But if this should be granted, it makes nothing for the *question* we have in hand. For seeing that *Christian Religion* most of all withdraws Men from those things which are pleasing unto the body, it cannot therefore have its beginning from the *affections* of the body, and consequently not from the *influence* of the *Stars*; which (as but now we said) have no power over the mind, otherwise than by the *mediation* of those *affections*. The most prudent among *Astrologers* exempt truly wise and good Men from the dominion of the *Stars*: And *such* verily were they that first professed *Christianity*, as their lives do shew. Or if there be any efficacy in learning and knowledge against the infection of the body, even among *Christians* there were ever some that were *excellent* in this particular.

Besides, as the most learned do confess, the effects of the *Stars* respect certain *Climates* of the World, and are only for a season; but this *Religion* hath now continued above the space of one thousand six hundred years, and that not in one part only, but in the most remote places of the

the World, and such as are under a far different position of the Stars.

SECT. XII.

The chief Points of Christianity are approved of by the Heathen: and if there be any thing that is hard to be believed therein, the like or worse is found among the Pagans.

BUT the *Pagans* have the less to object against *Christian Religion*: because all the parts thereof are of such *honesty* and *integrity*, that they convince Mens minds by their own light. In so much that there have not been wanting Men among the *Pagans* also, who have here and there said every one of those things, which our Religion hath in a body all together. As to give some instances; *true Religion* consists not in Rites and Ceremonies, but in the mind and *Spirit*: he is an *adulterer* that hath but *a desire* to commit adultery: we ought not to *revenge* injuries: one Man should be the *Husband* of one Wife only: the league or bond of *Matrimony* ought to be constant and perpetual: Man is bound to *do good* unto all, specially to them that are in want: we must refrain from *Swearing* as much as may be: And as for our Food and Apparel we ought to content our selves with so much as will suffice nature, and the like. Or if happily there be some points in *Christianity* hard to be believed, yet the like also is found amongst the wisest of the *Heathen* themselves;

as

as before we have shewn concerning the *immortality* of *Souls*, and of the *Resurrection* of Bodies. Thus *Plato*, as he learned from the *Chaldeans*, distinguished the Divine nature into the *Father*; and the mind of the Father; (which he calls also the *branch* of God, the Maker of the World) and the *Soul* or *Spirit*, which keeps together and preserveth all things.

Julian, as great an enemy as he was of *Christians*, thought that the Divine Nature might be joyned to the humane: and gave instance in *Æsculapius*, whom he imagined to have descended from *Heaven*, to the end he might teach Men the Art of *Physick*. The *Cross* of *Christ* offendeth many: But what do not the *Pagan* Writers tell of their *Gods*? that some of them waited upon *Kings* and *Princes*, others were Thunder-struck, others cut in sunder. And the *wisest* of them say, that the more it costs us to be honest, the more joy and delight it affords us.

To conclude, *Plato* in the second Book of his *Common-wealth*, as if he had been a *Prophet*, saith, for a *Man* to appear truly *just* and upright, it is requisite that his *vertue* be bereaved of all outward *ornaments*; so that he be by others accounted a *wicked* wretch, and scoffed at, and last of all hanged. And indeed that Christ might be the *Pattern* of greatest *Patience*, could no otherwise be obtained.

The

The Fifth Book of the TRUTH of Christian Religion.

SECT. I.

A refutation of the Jews, *beginning with a speech unto them or prayer for them.*

JUST like that glimmering between light and darkness, which appears to those, who by little and little are endeavouring to get out of a dark Cave or Dungeon: such doth *Judaism* present it self to us (who are stepping out of the thick mist of *Paganism*, of which we have been discoursing) as a part and beginning of Truth. I request the *Jews* therefore not to be averse to hear us.

We are not ignorant that they are the *offspring* of holy Men, whom *God* was wont to visit both by his *Prophets*, and by his *Angels*. Of this Nation

Nation ſprang our *Meſſias*, and the firſt *Doctors* of *Chriſtianity*: It is their *Tree* whereinto we are ingraffed: they are the *keepers* of *God's Oracles*, which we do reverence as much as they, and with St. *Paul* ſigh unto *God* for them, and pray that the day may quickly come, when the Vail being taken away which hangs over their Faces, they with us ſhall ſee the fulfilling of the *Law*; And when (as it is in their *Prophecies*) every one of us that are ſtrangers ſhall lay hold on the *Cloak* of him that is an *Hebrew*, deſiring that we may together with a pious conſent *worſhip* the only *true God*, who is the *God* of *Abraham*, *Iſaac* and *Jacob*.

SECT. II.

The Jews *ought to account the Miracles of* Chriſt *ſufficiently proved.*

FIRST of all then, we muſt intreat them not to think that to be unjuſt in another Man's caſe, which they judge to be juſt and *equitable* in their own. If any *Pagan* demand of them why they believe that *Miracles* were wrought by *Moſes*, they can give no other anſwer ſave that there was always ſo conſtant a report thereof among their Nation, that it could not but proceed from the *teſtimony* of ſuch as had *ſeen* the ſame.

Thus that the Widows Oyl was increaſed by *Eliſha*: that *Naaman* the *Syrian* was ſuddenly cured of the Leproſie: that the Womans Son in whoſe Houſe he lodged was reſtored to life, and

and other such like, are believed by the *Jews* for no other reason than because *witnesses* of good credit have recorded to *posterity*, that such things were done. And they believe *Elias* his taking up into *heaven*, only for the single testimony of *Elisha*, as a Man beyond all exception. But we produce *twelve witnesses* of unblameable life to testifie that *Christ* ascended up into *Heaven*. And many more that saw him upon the Earth after his death. Which things if they be *true*, then necessarily *Christs doctrine* is *true* also; and indeed nothing at all can be alledged by the *Jews* for themselves, which by equal right or more just title may not be applied to us also. But to omit further testimonies, it is the confession of the Authors of the *Talmud*, and other *Jews* themselves, that strange *wonders* were wrought by *Christ*; which ought to suffice for this particular. For *God* cannot any way more effectually gain authority unto a doctrine published by Man, than by the working of *miracles*.

SECT. III.

And not believe that they were done by the help of Devils.

THESE *Miracles* of *Christ*, some said, were done by the help of *Devils*. But this calumny hath been confuted before, when we shewed that whersoever the *doctrine* of *Christ* was taught and known, there all power of the *Devils* was broken in pieces. Others reply that *Jesus* learned *Magick arts* in *Egypt*: but this

ſlander hath no more, nay not ſo much *colour* of *truth*, than the like accuſation by the *Pagans* framed againſt *Moſes*, whereof we read in *Pliny* and *Apuleius*.

For, that ever *Jeſus* was in *Egypt* doth not appear, ſave only out of the Writings of his Diſciples: who add further, that he was an *Infant* when he returned thence. But it is certain by his own and others report, that *Moſes* lived a great part of his time after he was grown to Mans eſtate in *Egypt*. Howbeit the Law, as well of *Moſes*, as of *Chriſt*, frees them both from this crime, plainly forbidding ſuch *arts*, as abominable in the ſight of *God*. And without all queſtion, if in the time of *Chriſt* and his Diſciples, there had been either in *Egypt*, or any where elſe any ſuch *Magical art*, whereby Men might have been enabled to do the like *marvels* as are related of *Chriſt*; to wit, giving ſpeech to the Dumb on a ſudden, making the Lame to walk, and the Blind to ſee; then would *Tyberius*, *Nero*, and other *Emperors* have found it out, who ſpared no coſts and charges in the *inquiry* after ſuch like things.

Nay, if it were *true* which the *Jews* relate, how that the *Senators* of the great *Council* were skill'd in *Magick arts*, that they might convince them that were guilty of that *iniquity*; then ſurely, they being ſo mightily incenſed againſt *Jeſus*, as they were, and envying the honour and reſpect which he obtained chiefly by his *miracles*, would either themſelves have done the like *works* by the ſame art, or by ſufficient *reaſons* would have made it appear, that the *works* of *Chriſt* proceeded from no other cauſe.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

Or by the Power of Words and Syllables.

MOreover, that is not only a meer fable but impudent lye, which some of the *Jews* have invented concerning the *Miracles* done by *Christ*, which they ascribe to a certain *secret name*, which (as they say) being placed in the *Temple* by *Solomon*, was preserved safe by two Lions, during the space of One Thousand Years and more, but afterward *stolen* away by *Jesus*. For there is no mention made of those *Lyons* (though it be a thing most remarkable and wonderful) either in the Books of *Kings* and *Chronicles*, or by *Josephus*: nor was there any such thing found by the *Romans*, who accompanying *Pompey*, entred into that *Temple*, before the times of *Jesus*.

SECT. V.

The Miracles of Jesus were divine, because he taught the worship of one God the Maker of the World.

IT being then granted, as the *Jews* cannot deny, that *Wonders* were wrought by *Christ*, it will follow from the very *Law* of *Moses*, that he must be *believed*. For *God* saith, *Deuter.* xviii. 15, &c. that *other Prophets after the time of Moses*

ſhould be raiſed up of God, to whom the People ſhould be obedient, or otherwiſe become liable to grievous puniſhments. Now *miracles* are the moſt infallible *marks* of the *Prophets*: Nor can any more illuſtrious be ſo much as conceived. But in *Deuter.* xiii. it is ſaid, that if *any* profeſſing himſelf to be a *Prophet* doth work *wonders*, yet He muſt not be *believed*, if he go about to *entice* the People to a new worſhip of the *Gods*. For, though ſuch *miracles* be done, yet this is only by *God's permiſſion*, for trial, whether the People would perſiſt conſtantly in the *worſhip* of the *true God*. From which places compared together the *Hebrew Interpreters* do rightly collect, that every one muſt be believed that worketh *miracles*, unleſs thereby he intice Men from the *worſhip* of the true God; and in that caſe only *miracles* are not to be credited, though in ſhew moſt *glorious*. Now *Jeſus* did not only not teach the *worſhipping* of *falſe Gods*; but alſo expreſly condemned it as a moſt grievous crime, and taught us to *reverence* the *writings* both of *Moſes* and the *Prophets* that ſucceeded him. Wherefore there is nothing that can be objected againſt the *miracles* that were wrought by *Chriſt*.

SECT

SECT. VI.

Answer to the Objection, taken from the difference between the Law of Moses *and of Christ, where is shewn that a more perfect Law than that of* Moses *might be given.*

AS touching that which some alledge, concerning the difference between the *law* of *Moses* and the *law* of *Christ*, it is but of small moment. For the *Hebrew Doctors* themselves make this rule, that *by the authority of a Prophet, who worketh miracles, any precept whatsoever may be boldly violated and transgressed, except that only which concerns the worship of the true God.* And surely that power of making laws, which belonged unto *God* when he gave the commandments by the hand of *Moses*, went not from him afterward: Neither can any Man that of his own right makes *laws*, be thereby hindred from making the contrary.

That which they object, that God then would be mutable, is nothing: for we speak not here of *Gods nature* and essence, but of his *works*. Light is changed into darkness, youth into old age, summer into winter, and all by the *work* of *God*. Thus *God* at the beginning gave *Adam* leave in Paradise to eat of other apples, but he forbad him to eat of the fruit of one tree: Why? even because it so *pleased him*. Generally he prohibited Men to kill others, yet he commanded *Abraham* to kill his Son. One while he forbad to offer *sacrifices* apart from the *Tabernacle*, another while he admitted of them.

Neither will it follow, becauſe the *Law* which was given by *Moſes* was good, therefore no *better* could be given. Parents are wont to ſpeak half words and ſtutter with *Infants*; to wink at the *vices* of their *childhood*; and entice them to learn with a piece of Cake. But ſo ſoon as they come to riper age, their *ſpeech* is corrected, the precepts of *vertue* are inſtilled into them by degrees, and they are taught what is the beauty of *vertue*, what its rewards. Now it is plain that the precepts of that *law* of *Moſes* were not exactly *perfect*, becauſe many *holy Men* of thoſe times led a more excellent *life* than thoſe *commandments* required. Thus *Moſes*, who ſuffered the *revenge* of a wrong to be exacted partly by blows, and partly by ſentence of the Judges, himſelf being vexed with moſt bitter injuries, became an Interceſſor for his enemies. So *David* willing to have his rebellious *Son* to be ſpared, did patiently endure reproachful ſpeeches caſt upon himſelf. We no where read that any *good Men* put away their Wives, which notwithſtanding was permitted by the *law*. The reaſon of which is, that Laws are accommodated to the greater part of a People: therefore in the ſtate and condition they were in, it was meet ſomething ſhould be winked at; to be reduced to a more perfect Rule, when *God* by a greater *efficacy* of the *Spirit* was to chuſe unto himſelf a new *peculiar people* out of all Nations. Yea, all the rewards which are expreſly promiſed by the *law* of *Moſes*, belong only to this *mortal life*: wherefore it muſt be granted, that there might ſome better *law* be given, whereby the *reward* of *eternal happineſs* ſhould be promiſed, not under any ſhadows, but in plain and expreſs

expreſs terms: which we ſee is done by the *law* of *Chriſt*.

SECT. VII.

The Law of Moſes was obſerved by Jeſus, who aboliſhed no Commandments that were eſſentially good.

AND here by the way, for the conviction of the *Jews* iniquity, it muſt be noted, that they who lived in *Chriſt*'s time, uſed him moſt baſely, and puniſhed him moſt unjuſtly; when as there could no juſt *accuſation* be laid againſt him for tranſgreſſing the *Law*. He was circumciſed; he uſed the ſame food and apparel that the *Jews* uſed: thoſe that were healed of Leproſie, he ſent unto the *Prieſts*: The *Paſſe-over* and other *Feſtival* days he religiouſly obſerved: Though he did *cure* ſome upon the *Sabbath day*; yet he ſhewed both by the *Law* and by the common received *opinions*, that ſuch works were not forbidden to be done upon the *Sabbath day*. Then it was, that he firſt began to publiſh the *abrogation* of ſome *Laws*, when after his triumph over Death he aſcended into Heaven, adorning his *Diſciples* upon Earth with illuſtrious gifts of the *holy Spirit*, whereby he made it evident that he had obtained a *regal power*, which includes in it the *authority* of making a *Law*: And that according to *Daniel*'s prophecie, *ch.* 3. & 7. compared with *ch.* 8. & 11. where he foretold, how that a little after the *deſtruction* of the Kingdoms of *Syria* and *Ægypt*, (the latter

whereof happened in the Reign of *Augustus*,) *GOD* would give the Kingdom to a *man* (who should seem but a vulgar Person) over all Nations and Languages, which Kingdom should never have an end.

Now that part of the *Law*, the *necessity* whereof was taken away by *Christ*, contained nothing that was *honest* in its own nature: but consisted of things that were indifferent in themselves, and consequently not *immutable*. For if those things had had in them any thing of themselves why they should be done; then would *God* have prescribed them not to *one*, but to *all* People; and not after that *mankind* had lived above the space of Two Thousand Years, but even from the beginning of all. Neither *Abel*, *Enoch*, *Noah*, *Melchisedeck*, *Job*, *Abraham*, *Isaac*, or *Jacob*, (though all of them were *godly men*, and dearly beloved of *God*) knew *this part* of the *Law*, but were altogether ignorant, or very little acquainted therewith; yet notwithstanding, for all that, they received the *testimony* of their *confidence* in *God*, and of *God*'s *love* unto them. Besides, neither did *Moses* exhort *Jethro* his Father in-law to the receiving of these *rites*, nor did *Jonah* the *Ninivites*, neither did any other *Prophets* reprehend the *Chaldæans*, *Ægyptians*, *Sydonians*, *Tyrians*, *Idumeans*, and *Moabites*, for not admitting those *ceremonies*, though when they writ unto them, they reckoned up their *sins* exactly enough. These then were *peculiar* precepts introduced either for the avoiding of some evil, which the *Jews* were *prone* unto; or for the *trial* of their *obedience*, or for the *signification* of some *future* things.

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Wherefore it is no more to be wondered, that *these* are *abolished*, than if any King should abrogate some *Municipal Statutes*, (which belong, that is, to particular Corporations) to the end he might establish *one law* within his dominions. Neither can there any reason be alledged, to prove that *God* did so *bind* himself, as that he would *change* nothing of the same.

For if it be said, that these precepts are called *perpetual*, the same *word* Men oftentimes use, when they would signifie that *that* which they command is not *yearly*, or accommodated to certain times, suppose of War, Peace, or Scarcity. Yet they are not thereby hindred from making new *constitutions* of the same things, specially when the *publick good* requires it. Thus in like manner some of the Divine precepts given to the *Hebrews* were *temporary*, during the Peoples abode in the *Wilderness*: others were strictly tied to their habitation in the Land of *Canaan*: therefore to distinguish these from the other, he calls them perpetual, whereby might be understood, that they ought not any where, or at any time to be *intermitted*, unless *God* signified that it was his *will* so to be. Which manner of speaking, since it is commonly used by all *people*, ought to be less wondered at by the *Hebrews*: who know that in their Law it is called a *perpetual statute*, and a *perpetual bondage*, which continues only from one *Jubilee* to another: And the coming of the *Messias* is called by them the accomplishment of the *Jubilee*, or the greatest *Jubilee* of all. Thus in the *Hebrew Prophets*, there was anciently a promise of making a *new covenant*, as in *Jerem.* xxxi. where God promiseth that *he will make a new covenant, which shall be*

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put into their inward parts, and written in their hearts, neither shall men have any need, that one shall learn Religion of another, for it shall be manifest unto all. Yea further, *the Lord will forgive them their former iniquities, and will remember their sin no more:* which is as if a King after great *enmity* and discord amongst his Citizens and Subjects, should for the establishment of *peace* and tranquillity among them, take away all diversity of Laws, and make one perfect *Law common* to them all, promising forgiveness of faults by-past, if hereafter they do amend. And this which hath been said might suffice, but we will survey every part of the Law which is abrogated, and shew they were neither such as in themselves could be well pleasing unto *God*, nor ought they to *continue* for ever.

SECT. VIII.

As the Sacrifices, which of themselves were never well-pleasing unto God.

THE first and chief thing to be considered, are the *Sacrifices*, which many of the *Hebrews* think were invented by *Man*, before that they were commanded by *God*. And true it is indeed, the *Hebrews* were desirous of abundance of Rites and Ceremonies, so that there was cause enough why GOD should enjoyn them very many, if it were but for this reason, lest they should return unto the *worship* of *false Gods*, by the remembrance of their *sojourning* in *Egypt*.

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Howbeit when their *Posterity* made too great account of them, as though of themselves they had been acceptable unto *God*, and a part of *true piety*; then did the *Prophets* reprehend them for it: About Sacrifices, saith God by *David*, in the fiftieth Psalm, *I will not so much as exchange a word with thee; as if I were desirous to have thy burnt-offerings continually before me. I will take no Bullock out of thy house, nor he-goats out of thy folds.*

For every beast of the forest is mine, and so are the cattel upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee, for the World is mine, and the fulness thereof: thinkest thou that I will eat the flesh of Bulls, or drink the bloud of goats? Offer unto God thanksgiving, and pay thy vows unto the most high.

Some there are among the *Hebrews*, who say that this is spoken, because they that offered those *sacrifices*, were of an *impure* mind, and dishoneſt conversation. But the words now alledged shew *another matter*, to wit, that the *thing* in it self was no whit acceptable unto *God*. For if we consider the whole *series* and *order* of the *Psalm*, we shall find that *God* in these words speaks unto the godly: for he had said, *Gather my Saints together unto me*, and *hear my people*: which are the words of a Teacher and one that instructeth. Then having ended those words now alledged, as his manner is, he speaks unto the *wicked*: *But unto the wicked God saith.* To the same sense we may cite other places, as in the 51. Psal. *Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it thee, but thou delightest not in burnt-offerings. The sacrifice of God is a broken Spirit:*

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a broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. So likewise in the fortieth Psalm; *Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire, but hast tied me to thee, as he whose ear was boared through, to be thy servant: burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Loe, I come: In the volume of the book it is written of me: I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy Law is within my heart. I have preached righteousness in the great Congregation: Loe, I have not refrained my Lips, O Lord, thou knowest. I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart, I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation: I have not concealed thy loving kindness, and thy truth from the great Congregation.* The like we read in the Prophet *Isaiah, chap.* 1. *To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me, saith the Lord? I am full of the burnt-offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts, and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he-goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand to tread my Courts?* Answerable to this place, and the Interpreter of it, is that in *Jer.* 7. *Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, the God of Israel; Put your burnt-offerings unto your sacrifices, and eat their flesh your selves: For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the Land of Egypt, concerning burnt-offerings and sacrifices. But this thing commanded I them, saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my People: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you.* Agreeing with this, is that in *Hosea* 6. *To shew mercy to men, is more acceptable to me than sacrifice, to think rightly of God more than all burnt-offerings.* Lastly,

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in the sixth of *Micah*, when the question was made, what was the best way to obtain the favour of God? whether by coming before him with a great number of rams, or with a great quantity of Oyl, or with Calves of a Year old? to this *God* answers and saith, *I will tell thee what is truely good and acceptable unto me; namely, to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.*

By all which places it being apparent, that Sacrifices are not in the number of those things which God desires for themselves or primarily; and that the People (a naughty superstition creeping in, as is usual, by little and little among them) placed a great part of their piety in them, and believed they made a sufficient compensation for their sins by sacrifices: what wonder is it, if God at length took away a thing, which was not now in its own nature indifferent, but whose use was now become a Vice? since King *Hezekiah* did not stick to break even the brazen Serpent, erected by *Moses*; because the People began to honour it with Religious Worship.

Moreover, there are divers *Prophecies*, that foretold these *sacrifices*, whereof we speak, should come to an end: which any one may easily conceive, who doth but consider that according to the *Law* of *Moses*, only the *posterity* of *Aaron* was to do *sacrifice*, and that only in their own Country. But in the 110 *Psalm*, there is a *King* promised, whose *dominion* should be most ample, the beginning whereof *should be out of Sion*: and this same *King* was to be a *Priest also for ever, and that after the Order of Melchisedeck*. So *Isaiah* saith, *chap.* 19. *That there shall be an altar to the Lord in the midst of the Land of Egypt,*

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where not only the *Ægyptians*, but the *Assyrians* also, and the *Israelites* shall worship *God*. And in the 66. *chapter*, he saith, that the People of all Nations and Languages which are far and widely distant, shall *come* as well as the *Israelites*, *and offer gifts unto God*, and of them also there shall *be ordained Priests and Levites*: All which could not come to pass so long as the *Law* of *Moses* remained in force. Add unto these that in the first of *Malachy* God foretelling future things, saith, he abhorred the offerings of the *Hebrews*, *I have no pleasure in you, neither will I accept an offering at your hand. For from the rising of the Sun even unto the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering, for my name shall be great among the Heathen, saith the Lord of Hosts.*

Lastly, *Daniel* in his 9. *chapter* rehearsing the *Prophecy* of the *Angel Gabriel* concerning Christ, saith, *that he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease.* And not by words only, but *really* and indeed *God* plainly enough shews that he likes not any longer those *Sacrifices* which were prescribed by *Moses*, seeing that he hath suffered the *Jews* for the space of one thousand six hundred years and more to be without *Temple*, without *Altar*, and without any certain distinction of their Tribes or *Lineage*; whence it might appear who *they* are that may lawfully offer *sacrifice*.

SECT.

SECT. IX.

The difference of Meats.

NOW what we have declared concerning the *Law* of *Sacrifices*, the same may be proved of that *Law* which forbids the *use of some kinds of meats*. For it is plain that after the great Deluge, God gave licence unto *Noah* and his Posterity, to use any sort of *victual*: Which Right therefore passed not only to *Japhet* and *Cham*, but also unto *Sem* and his Posterity, *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*. But afterward when the People being in *Egypt* were addicted to the naughty *superstitions* of that Countrey; then began God to forbid them the eating of some kind of *living creatures*; either because the *Ægyptians* offered those creatures unto their *Gods*, and made divination by them; or because in that ceremonial *Law* Mens sundry *vices* were shadowed out by divers kind of *living creatures*.

Again, that these *precepts* were not *universal*, it is manifest by that *statute* which was made touching the *flesh* of a Beast, that died of it self, *Deut.* 14. which to eat was not *lawful* for the *Israelites*, but it was lawful for the *strangers* that dwelt among them, unto whom the *Jews* by *divine* command were to perform all offices of *courtesie*, as persons esteemed by God. Likewise the ancient *Hebrew* Doctors do plainly teach, that in the time of the *Messias*, the Law concerning forbidden meats should cease: when the *Sow* should be as clean and pure as the *Oxe*. And verily, in as much as *God* out of all Nations would collect

collect unto himself *one Church*, it was more just and equitable to have a *common liberty* than a *bondage* in such things.

SECT. X.

And of Days.

IT follows, that we consider of *Festival* Days: all which were instituted and ordained in remembrance of that benefit received of *God*, when they were *freed* from *Egyptian calamity*, and afterward brought into the *promised Land*. Now the Prophet *Jeremy*, in the 16. and 23. Chapters, saith, *that the time would come when more new and greater benefits should so obscure the remembrance of that benefit, as that afterward there should scarce be any mention thereof.* Besides, that which but now was said concerning *Sacrifices*, is true also of *Festival* Days; the People began to *put confidence* in them, thinking that if they kept and *observed them well*, it was no matter though they *transgressed* in other matters: whereupon in the first Chapter of *Isaiah*, *God* saith, that his Soul hated their *new Moons*, and *appointed Feasts*, and that they were such a *trouble* unto him, as that he was *weary* to bear them. More particularly it is objected concerning the *Sabbath*, that the *law* thereof is *universal* and *perpetual*, because it was not given to one peculiar People only, but to *Adam* the Parent of all Mankind at the very beginning of the World. I answer with the most learned of the *Hebrews*, that there is a twofold *precept* concerning the *Sabbath*, the first is a *pre-*

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cept for *commemoration*, *Exod.* 20. 8. and the second is a *precept* for *observation*, *Exod.* 31. 31. The former is fulfilled by a religious *remembrance* of the Worlds *creation*: and the latter consists in an exact *refraining* from all kinds of other labour. The former was given from the beginning, which doubtless those *godly men* before the Law did obey, to wit, *Enoch*, *Noah*, *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*. The last of which, though they travelled much, as we read, yet there is no where the least sign or remembrance of their intermitting their journey for the *Sabbath*; which after they came out of *Egypt* you shall always meet with. For after that the People were brought out of *Egypt*, and had happily passed over the *red Sea*, the next day they celebrated a *Sabbath* of *rest* and *safety*; wherein they sang a *Song* of *triumph* and rejoycing: from which time that *exact rest* upon the *Sabbath* was commanded, which is first mentioned upon occasion of gathering the *Manna*, *Exod.* 16. 23. *Exod.* 35. 2. *Levit.* 23. 3. And in this sense the deliverance from *Egypt* is made the reason for the Law of the *Sabbath*, *Deut.* 5. 15. By which *Law* provision also was made for *servants* against the severity of those *masters*, that would not grant them any rest or relaxation from *daily labour*, as may be seen in the places aforesaid. It is true indeed, *strangers* were bound to observe this *Law*, because it was meet there should be one *form* of *rest* among all the People; but this *Law* of so exact *resting* upon the *Sabbath* was not given to other People, as may appear by this, that in many places it is called a *sign*, and a special *covenant* also between *God* and the *Israelites*, as in *Exod.* 31. 13. *and* 16. Now we have proved

before by the *promise* of far greater *benefits*, that the *ordinances* which were instituted for a *memorial* of the coming out from *Egypt*, were not *such* as ought *never* to cease. Add moreover, if the *Law* concerning the *rest* upon the *Sabbath* had been given from the beginning, and in that sense, that it never might be abolished; then surely that Law had prevailed over other laws, when there was a clashing between them: which we find was quite contrary, by its yielding to them. For it is evident, that Infants were rightly *circumcised* upon the *Sabbath*; like, as during the time that the *Temple* stood, there were Beasts killed for *sacrifice*, as well upon the *Sabbath*, as upon other days. Yea, the *Hebrew* Masters themselves shew the mutability of this *law*, when they say, that by a *Prophet*'s appointment and *command* a work may be rightly done upon the *Sabbath*-day: And this they prove by the taking of *Jerico* upon the *Sabbath*, according to the commandment of *Joshuah*. And some of them not unfitly shew, that the distinction of days shall be taken away in the time of the *Messias*, from that place in *Isaiah*, lxvi. 23. where it is prophesied, *It shall come to pass that the worship of God shall be perpetual from one new Moon to another, from one Sabbath to another.*

SECT.

SECT. XI.

Also of outward Circumcision.

IN the next place let us come to *Circumcision*, which certainly is Elder than *Moses*: For it was given in command to *Abraham* and his *Posterity*.

Howbeit the commandment thereof was the introduction or beginning of the *covenant* published by *Moses*: For thus we read, that God spake unto *Abraham*, *Gen.*17. saying, *I will give unto thee, and to thy Seed after thee, the Land wherein thou art a stranger, all the Land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God. And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou and thy Seed after thee: every man-child among you shall be circumcised.* But now we know by what hath been already said, that in the place of this *covenant*, a *new covenant* was to succeed, which should be common to all People: For which cause the necessity of that note of *distinction*, ought to cease. Besides, in the *precept* of *circumcision* there was a *mystical* and more excellent *signification* contained, which the *Prophets* do plainly shew in that they command the *circumcision* of the *heart*, which all the commandments of *Jesus* aim at.

Wherefore the *promises* also annexed to *circumcision*, are in like manner to be referred to some greater thing: As that of *earthly possessions*, to the revelation of a possession truly eternal; which was never made more manifest than by *Jesus*: So that promise of making *Abraham a Fa-*

ther of many Nations, hath reference to that *time*, when not a few, but an infinite number of People dispersed thorowout the whole World, should imitate *Abraham*'s Faith and confidence in *God*, which is so often mentioned in Scripture; and this never came to pass, but in the time of the *Gospel*. Now it is no marvel, if the *shadows of an intended work* be taken away, when the *matter* it self is accomplisht. Lastly, that the *grace* of *God* was not tied to this *sign*, we may easily discern, because not only the more *ancient*, but *Abraham* himself having not as yet received *circumcision*, *pleased God*: The *Hebrews* also, during all the time of their journey through the Desarts of *Arabia*, omitted *circumcision*, and yet *God* found no fault with them for it.

SECT. XII.

And yet the Apostles of Jesus were gentle in the toleration of these things.

NO doubt but the *Hebrews* had cause to yield many thanks to *Jesus* and his *Ambassadors*, for that by *Christ* they might be freed from that heavy yoke of *ceremonies*, and be assured of this their freedom both by *gifts* and *miracles*, such as were not inferiour to those that were wrought by *Moses*.

And yet the first Publishers of our *Christian doctrine* did not exact so much of them as to acknowledge this their *happiness*: But if they would admit of the *Commandments* of *Christ*, which were full of all *honesty*; they easily suffered them to

to follow what course of life they pleased in matters of *indifferency*: Yet so, that upon *strangers* (to whom this *law* of *rites* was never given) they should not impose a necessity of observing them. Which one thing is sufficient to make it plainly appear, that the *Jews* do unjustly reject the *doctrine* of *Christ*, under that pretence of the *ceremonial Law*. Having then answered this Objection, which chiefly is alledged against the *miracles* of *Jesus*: we will now come to other *arguments*, which may fitly serve for the conviction of the *Jews*.

SECT. XIII.

A Proof against the Jews, from the promised Messias.

IT is agreed upon between *us* and the *Jews*, that in the *predictions* of the *Prophets*, above many other *authors* and *donors of great good things* to the *Hebrews*, there was *one man* promised far more *excellent* than the rest: whom they call by a Name common to others, but in the highest sense of it, belonging to him alone, the MESSIAS. This *Messias* we say is come long ago, but they expect him as yet for to come. It remains then that we seek for a decision of this controversie out of those Books, the *authority* whereof we both do joyntly acknowledge.

SECT. XIV.

Who is proved to be already come, by the limited time of his coming, which was foretold.

THE Prophet *Daniel*, to whom *Ezekiel* hath given a Teſtimony of exceeding great Piety, neither would willingly *deceive* us, nor was himſelf *deceived* by the Angel *Gabriel*. Now He, taught by the ſame *Angel*, in the Ninth Chapter of his *Prophecie* hath left it recorded, that before *five hundred* years ſhould be expired, after the promulgation of the *decree* touching the reſtoring of the City *Hieruſalem*, the *Meſſias* ſhould come. But now ſince that time above *two thouſand* years have paſſed; and yet he, whom the *Jews* expect, is not come: neither can they name any other *perſon*, to whom that ſpace or *time* can be rightly applyed; which agrees ſo fitly unto *Jeſus*, that *Nehumias* an *Hebrew* Doctor, who lived about *Fifty Years* before *Chriſt*, plainly ſaid then; that the time of the *Meſſias* foretold by *Daniel* could not be protracted beyond thoſe *Fifty Years* then next enſuing. And with this note of *time*, agrees another *note* which we have toucht before; concerning the eſtabliſhing of a dominion over all Nations by a Divine authority, after that the *poſterity* of *Seleucus* and *Ptolomy* had ceaſed to reign; the latter whereof ended in *Cleopatra*, a little before *Jeſus* was born. The third *note* is ſet down in the foreſaid *ix.* Chapter of *Daniel*; namely, that after the coming of the *Meſſias*, the City of *Hieruſalem* ſhould be overthrown: which *Prophecy* of the Citie's

Citie's destruction, *Josephus* himself referreth unto *his time*; whence it follows, that the *time* appointed for the coming of the *Messias*, was then already past. Hereunto likewise belongs that in the second Chapter of the Prophet *Haggai*, where God by the Prophet comforteth *Zerubbabel, the Son of Shealtiel, Governor of Judah, and Joshuah the Son of Josedech the high Priest*, who were sorrowful to see the Temple, which they built, fall so short of the first Temple; with this promise, *that the glory of the latter house should be greater than the former:* which certainly can neither be meant of the *greatness* of the work, nor of the *matter* of the building, nor of the fabrick and artificial *structure*, nor of the ornaments of that Temple; as may appear by the *history* of those times, both in the Holy *Scriptures*, and in *Josephus*, compared with that of the Temple of *Solomon*. Add to this, that the *Hebrew* Doctors note, this latter Temple wanted *two* of the greatest indowments, which the former enjoyed, *viz.* A certain *conspicuous Light*, which was the token of the Divine Majesty there, and *Divine Inspiration*. But God himself briefly declares, in that very place, wherein the latter Temple should excel the former; when He promises He would settle, as by a sure Covenant, *His Peace*, i. e. his favour and loving kindness, in that Temple. Which the Prophet *Malachi* declares more largely in his Third Chapter; *Behold, I will send my messenger, who shall prepare my ways. There shall shortly come into his Temple* (now *Malachi* lived when the latter Temple was built) *that Lord whom ye desire; even that messenger of the Covenant, who is your delight.* Wherefore the *Messias* ought to come while the second

Temple ſtood, which in the account of the *Hebrews*, comprehends all that time which was between *Zerubbabel* and *Veſpaſian*: for in the time of *Herod* the *Great*, the Temple was not *re-edified* out of its old ruines, but by little and little it was *repaired*, bearing ſtill the name of the ſame Temple. And indeed there was ſo firm an opinion amongſt the *Hebrews*, and the neighbouring People, that the *Meſſias* was ſurely to come in thoſe times, that many took *Herod*, others *Judas Gaulonites*, and a third ſort others that lived about the times of *Jeſus*, to be the *Meſſias*.

SECT. XV.

Anſwer to that, which ſome conceive, touching the deferring of his coming, for the ſins of the People.

SOME of the *Jews*, perceiving themſelves to be hard put to it, by theſe *Arguments*, concerning the *coming* of the *Meſſias*, go about to ſhift them off, by telling us, that *their ſins* were the cauſe why he did not come at the promiſed time. But (to omit that thoſe Prophecies expreſs a Decree determined, not ſuſpended upon any condition) how is it poſſible, that this *coming* ſhould be deferred, by reaſon of their ſins, when this alſo was foretold, that becauſe of the many and hainous *tranſgreſſions* of the People, the great *City* ſhould be laid waſte a little after the times of the *Meſſias*? Moreover, one reaſon of the *Meſſias* his coming, was,

to

to cure a most corrupted World, and together with rules for amendment of life, to bring a pardon for sins past. Whence it is that *Zachariah* saith, concerning his times, Chap. xiii. that *there should be then a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the Inhabitants of Hierusalem, for to wash away sin and uncleanness.* And it is affirmed by the *Hebrews* themselves, that the *Messiah* shall be called *Ischopher*, that is, a Reconciler or Expiator of sins. But it is against all reason, to say, that any thing was deferred, because of that *disease*, for which it was precisely destinated and appointed.

SECT. XVI.

Also from the present state of the Jews, compared with those things which the Law promiseth.

TOuching this which we affirm, of the coming of the *Messias* long since into the World, the *Jews* are convinced by *very sence*. *God* made a Covenant with *Moses*, and promised to them the happy possession of the Land of *Palestine*, so long as they should lead their life according to the *commandments* of the *Law*: But contrarily he threatned *banishment*, and such like *calamities* to come upon them, if they did grievously transgress the same. Yet, if at any time when they were oppressed with *miseries*, they *repenting* of their sins, returned unto *obedience*; then would he be *moved* to have mercy upon the People, and cause, that though they were scattered to the utter-

uttermoſt parts of the Earth, yet ſhould they return again into their own *Countrey*, as we may read, in *Deut.* 30. and *Nehem.* 1. and elſewhere. But now for the ſpace of *one thouſand five hundred years* and more, the *Jews* have wanted a *Countrey* and a *Temple*: And when they have attempted to build a new one, they have been always hindred: even by Balls of Fire breaking out in the Foundations, and overthrowing the work; as *Ammianus Marcellinus*, a Writer, who was not a Chriſtian, reports. When this People in times paſt had defiled themſelves with abominable wickedneſſes, commonly ſacrificing even their *children* unto *Saturn*, accounting *adultery* to be no ſin, oppreſſing and ſpoiling the Fatherleſs and Widows, and ſhedding the innocent bloud in great abundance, all which the Prophets upbraid them with; then did they *ſuffer exile*, yet not longer than for the ſpace of *ſeventy years*, during which time alſo, *God* did not neglect to *ſpeak* unto them by his Prophets, and to *comfort* them with the *hope* of a return, pointing alſo at the very time thereof. But now, ever ſince they were expelled out of their *Countrey*, they continue *baniſhed* and contemptible: No *Prophet* comes unto them: there is no ſign or token of their return. Their Maſters and Ring-leaders (as if they were blaſted with the *ſpirit* of *giddineſs*,) are fallen away to filthy fables and doctrines very ridiculous, wherewith the *books* of the *Talmud* do abound: which they are bold to call *the law given by word of mouth*, and are wont to *equal* or prefer to that which was written by *Moſes*. For ſuch things as are therein to be read concerning *God*'s weeping and lamenting, becauſe he had ſuffered the *City* to be deſtroyed;

destroyed; of his daily care and diligence in reading the *Law*; of *Behemoth* and *Leviathan*, and many other matters, are so absurd, that it would be irksome even to repeat them. Howbeit the *Jews* in all this time have neither turned to the worship of *false Gods*, as they did in times past; neither have they *defiled* themselves with bloody murders, nor are they accused of *adulteries*: But by prayers and fastings they *labour* to appease *God*'s wrath, and yet are not heard. Which things being so, one of these two must needs be granted; namely, that either the *covenant* that was given by *Moses* is quite abolished; or the whole body of the *Jewish* Nation lies under the guilt of some notorious *crime*, which hath continued for so many Ages together: which what it is, let themselves speak; or if they cannot tell, then let them *believe us*, that this sin is no other, but the *contempt* of the *Messias*, who was come before that these *evils* began to fall upon them.

SECT. XVII.

Jesus is proved to be the Messias, by those things which were foretold concerning the Messias.

BY this which hath been spoken, it is manifest that the Messias came many Ages ago: we add further, that he is no other but *Jesus*. For what other persons soever either were, or would have been accounted the Messias, they have left

left no *Sect* behind them to uphold and maintain that opinion. There are not any at this day that profess themselves to be followers either of *Herod*, or of *Judas Caulonita*, or of that great Impostor *Barchochebas*, who living in the times of *Adrian*, said, that he was the Messias, and deceived some, even of the most learned. But those that profess the name of *Jesus*, have continued from the time that he lived upon Earth, even until this day, and are still not a few only in this or that Countrey, but very many dispersed, as far as the World extendeth. I could alledge many other *testimonies* anciently foretold or believed concerning the *Messias*, which we believe were accomplished in *Jesus*, since they are not so much as affirmed of any other: as namely, that he came of the *posterity* of *David*, and was born of a *Virgin*; which was divinely revealed to him that married that *Virgin*; when he would have put her away, supposing she had been got with child by another; Also that this *Messias* was born at *Bethlehem*, and began first to publish his *doctrine* in *Galilee*, healing all kinds of Diseases, giving sight to the *blind*, and making the *lame* to walk: but this one may suffice for many, the effect of which continues unto this day. It is most manifest by the *Prophecies* of *David*, *Isaiah*, *Zachariah*, and *Hosea*, that the *Messias* was to be an *Instructor*, not only of the *Jews*, but also of the *Gentiles*: that by him the worship of false Gods should fall to the ground, and a huge multitude of *aliens* and *strangers* should be brought to the *worship* of the only *true God*. Before *Jesus* his coming almost the whole World was overspread with false *worships* and *religions*: which afterward by little and little began

began to *vanish* away, and not only single persons, but both People and Kings were converted unto the *worship* and service of one *God*. This was not owing to the *Jewish Rabbins*; but to the Disciples of *Jesus* and their Successors. Thus *they* were made the People of *God*, that before were not the People of *God*; and the saying of old *Jacob*, *Gen.* 49. was fulfilled, That before all civil Authority should be taken from *Judah*, *Shilo* should come. Which the *Chaldee*, and other Interpreters expound of the *Messias*, to whom even foreign Nations should be obedient.

SECT. XVIII.

Answer to that which is objected, of some things that are not fulfilled.

THE *Jews* usually object, that *some things* were foretold, concerning the times of the Messias, which are not yet fulfilled. But for answer, *those matters* which they alledge are obscure, and admit of divers *significations*: wherefore we ought not, because of them, to forsake those things that are manifest. Such as the *holiness* of the *commandments* of *Jesus*; the excellency of the *reward*, and the perspicuous *language*, wherein it is propounded: to which if we add the *testimony* of his miracles, these ought to be sufficient inducements to the receiving of his *doctrine*. As for those *Prophecies* which go under the name of a shut or clasped Book, oftentimes for the right understanding thereof, there is requisite some *divine helps* and *assistances*, which they are worthily deprived of, that neglect mani-

manifeſt *truths*. The places of *Scripture* which they object are diverſly expounded, as themſelves cannot deny. And if any Men pleaſe to compare either the ancient Interpreters, which lived when the People were led Captive into *Babylon*, or ſuch as lived about Chriſt's time, with thoſe that writ after that *Chriſtianity* began to be hateful and odious unto the *Jews*, he ſhall find new *expoſitions* purpoſely invented, to croſs thoſe former, that well agreed with the ſenſe of *Chriſtians*. They know well enough that there are many things in the Holy Scriptures, which muſt be underſtood by a figure, and not in propriety of ſpeech; as when *God* is ſaid to have deſcended; and to have a mouth, ears, eyes and noſtrils. And why may not we likewiſe expound divers things, that are ſpoken of the *times* of the *Meſſias*, after the ſame manner; as that the *Wolf* ſhall dwell with the *Lamb*, and the *Leopard ſhall lye down with the Kid*, and the *Calf* and the *young Lion*, and the *fatling* together; and the *ſucking child* ſhall play with the *Serpents*: and the *mountain* of the Lord ſhall be exalted above other mountains, whither *ſtrangers* ſhall come and *worſhip*.

There are ſome things *promiſed*, which by antecedent or conſequent words, or by the very ſenſe imply *a tacite condition* in them. Thus *God* promiſed many things unto the *Hebrews* upon condition they would receive the Meſſias that was ſent, and obey him: which ſame things, if they come not to paſs accordingly, then may they blame themſelves that are the cauſe thereof.

Again, other matters were *promiſed determinedly* and without all condition; which if they be not already accompliſhed, yet may *be hoped* for

for hereafter. For it is evident, even among the *Jews*, that the time or *Kingdom* of the Messias must endure unto the end of the World.

SECT. XIX.

And to that which is objected, of the mean condition and death of Jesus.

MANY do take exception at the low and *mean condition* of *Jesus*: but unjustly, because in *sacred Writ* it is often said, that *God will exalt the humble, but cast down the proud. Jacob*, when he passed over *Jordan*, carried nothing with him, save his *staff* only; and yet returned enriched with a great flock of sheep.

Moses was a poor *exile*, and feeding the flocks, when *God* appeared to him in the *bush*, and gave him commission for the conduct of his People. *David* also was called to his Kingdom, when he was *feeding sheep*, and with many other such like *examples* doth the Sacred story abound. Now concerning the *Messias*, we read, that he should be a gladsome *Messenger* unto the poor, that he should make no noise in publick, nor use any strife and contention, but deal *gently*, forbearing to break the shaken reed, and cherishing that heat which remains in smoaking flax.

Neither ought the rest of his *afflictions*, no not his *ignominious death*, to make him despicable to any. For *God* oftentimes suffereth the *godly*, not only to be vexed and disquieted by the *wicked*, as righteous *Lot* was by the Citizens of *Sodom*: but also even to be *destroyed* and slain, as is plain

plain by the example of *Abel*, who was cruelly *murdered* by his Brother; of *Isaiah*, who was *sawn* in pieces; and of the *seven brethren* in the *Maccabees*, who, together with their *mother*, were miserably tormented and put to death. The very *Jews* themselves sing the *Seventy ninth Psalm*, wherein are these words, *The dead bodies of thy servants have they given to be meat unto the fowls of the heaven: the flesh of those whom thou lovest, O God, unto the beasts of the earth. Their blood have they shed like water round about Jerusalem: and there was none to bury them.* And whosoever considers the words of *Isaiah*, in the 53. Chapter, cannot deny that the *Messias* himself ought to have passed thorow much *affliction* and death, to come into his Kingdom, and obtain power to *adorn* his Houshold or Church with the most excellent blessings.

The words in the *Prophet* are these; *Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of the dry ground: He hath no form or comeliness, and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with griefs: And we hide as it were our faces from him. He was so despised, and in so small esteem among us. Surely he hath born our griefs, and carried our sorrows, yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions: he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. All we, like sheep, have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way: And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He*

was

was oppressed, and he was afflicted; yet he opened not his mouth. He is brought as a Lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. After imprisonment and sentence passed on him, he was taken away: but who shall worthily declare his duration when he was restored to life again? For he was cut off out of the land of the living; but for the transgression of my people he was stricken; and he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death: though he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. But though it hath pleased the Lord to bruise him, and he hath put him to grief; Yet because he made himself an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days; and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand; He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justifie many; by taking away their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong: because he hath poured out his soul unto death. And he was numbred with the transgressors, and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. Who is there either among the *Kings* or *Prophets*, to whom these things can be applied? Surely none. As touching that *shift*, which some later *Jews* have invented, telling us, that the *Prophet* speaks here of the *Hebrews* dispersed thorow all *Nations*; that, by their example and perswasion, they might every where make many Proselytes: this sense is first of all repugnant to many testimonies of holy Writ, which loudly proclaim, that no evil is befain the *Jews*, which they have not deserved (and a great deal more beside) for their evil deeds. He also, of whom

Isaias treats, was to deprecate God for the Heathen, which the *Jews* do not. And lastly, the very order and series of the Prophetical discourse, will not bear that interpretation. For either the *Prophet*, (which seems *more proper* to that place) or *God* saith; *This evil hapned unto him for the iniquities of my People.* Now the *people* of *Isaiah*, or the *peculiar people* of *God*, are the *people* of the *Hebrews*; therefore he who is said by *Isaiah* to have suffered such grievous things, cannot be that same People.

But the ancient *Doctors* of the *Hebrews* more ingenuously *confess*, that these things were spoken of the *Messias*; whereupon some later among them have devised two *Messiases*; the one they call the Son of *Joseph*, who was to suffer many miseries, and a bloody death: the other is the Son of *David*, to whom all things should succeed prosperously. When it would be far more easie and more consonant with the *Writings* of the *Prophets*, to acknowledge but *one Messias*, who was to pass unto his Kingdom, through many *difficulties* and *death* it self; which *we believe* of *Jesus*, and the thing it self declares to be *most true*.

SECT. XX.

And, as though they were honest men that put him to death.

MANY of the *Jews* are kept back from receiving the Religion of *Jesus* by a certain preconceived opinion of the *vertue* and *honesty*

honesty of their *Ancestors*, and specially of the *Priests*, who out of prejudice condemned *Jesus*, and rejected his *Doctrine*. But what kind of Men their Ancestors oft-time were, (that they may not think I defame them) let them hear the words of their own *Law* and *Prophets*, wherein they are often called *uncircumcised in heart and ears, a people that honoured God with their lips, and with the garnish of Ceremonies; but their hearts were far from him.* It was their *Ancestors* that went about, and were very near to have kill'd their brother *Joseph*; and, in very deed, sold him into *bondage*. It was their *Ancestors* also, that by their continual mutinies and seditions, made *Moses* weary of his life, who was their *Leader* and *Redeemer*, whom the Earth, the Sea, and the Air obeyed. These were they that *loathed* the Bread that was sent from *Heaven*; complaining, as though they had been in greatest want and scarcity, even when they belched up again the Fowl that they had eaten. It was their *Ancestors* that forsaking *David* so excellent and good a *King*, followed *Absolon* his rebellious Son. It was their *Ancestors* that slew *Zachariah*, the Son of *Jehojada*, in the most holy place, making their *Priest* himself a Sacrifice of their cruelty. Now, as concerning the *Chief Priests*, they were such as *conspired* the death of *Jeremy* by a false accusation, and had kill'd him indeed, unless they had been hindered by the authority of some of the Nobles: Notwithstanding which, they prevailed so far, as to have him imprisoned until the very moment that the *City* was taken. If any Man imagine those were any thing better, that lived in the times of *Jesus*, *Josephus* will shew him his *error*; who describes their villanous

acts, and grievous punishments, such, as the like were never heard of, and yet, as he thinks, below their desert. Neither may we conceive more favourably of their *great Council* or *Senate*; especially, because at that time the *Senators* were not chosen after the old custom, by laying on of hands, but by the pleasure, or sway of powerful Men: as the High-Priests also were not elected for term of life, but obtained that dignity only from year to year, and that oftentimes for *money*. We need not then wonder, if Men that were puffed up with pride, unsatiable in their *ambition* and *covetousness*, did break out into fury and madness, when they beheld a *Man*, that by his holy *precepts* and upright *behaviour*, reproved their far different *life* and vitious *conversation*. Neither was there any other thing laid to his charge, but what the best of Men had been accused of long before. Thus that *Micaiah*, that lived in the time of *Jehosaphat*, was cast into Prison, because he boldly spake the *truth* against Four hundred *lying Prophets*. *Ahab* upbraided *Elijah*, just as the *Priests* did *Jesus*, saying, that he was *the man that troubled the peace of Israel*. So likewise *Jeremy* was accused, as well as *Jesus*, for prophesying against the *Temple*. Add moreover what the ancient *Doctors* of the *Hebrews* foretold, how that in the times of the *Messias*, Men should be as *impudent as Dogs*, *as stubborn as Asses*, *and as cruel as wild Beasts*. God himself, foreseeing long before, how most of the *Jews* would stand affected in the time of the *Messias*, said, it would come to pass, that *they* should become his *people*, who were not his *people*; and of all the Cities and Towns of the *Jews*, scarce one or two would go to the *holy Mountain*: Howbeit,

beit, that which was wanting in *their number*, should be supplyed by *strangers*: Also that the *Messias* should be a *downfal* to the *Hebrews*: and this Stone which the Builders refused, should be put in the *chief place* for the joyning together of the *work*.

SECT. XXI.

Answer to the Objection, that many Gods are worshipped by the Christians.

THERE remain yet two accusations to be answered, which the *Jews* bring both against our *Christian Doctrine* and *Worship*. The first is, in that they say, we *Christians* do *worship* many *Gods*.

But we answer, that this is nothing but a wrested explication of another's opinion, out of hatred. For, why should this be more objected against us *Christians*, than against *Philo* the *Jew*, who oftentimes makes *three* to be in *God*; and calls the *reason* or the *word* of *God*; *the name of God*, the *maker* of the World; neither *unbegotten*, as is *God* the Father of all, nor so begotten as Men are? Whom both *Philo*, and *Moses* the Son of *Nachman*, call also the Angel or Ambassador, who takes care of the Universe: Or against the *Cabalists*, who distinguish *God* into three *lights*, which some of them call by the same names that *Christians* do; to wit, of the *Father*, of the *Son* or the word, and of the *Holy Ghost*. And let me not omit what is agreed upon by all the *Hebrews*, that the Spirit wherewith the *Prophets*

were moved and inspired, is not any created thing, and yet it is distinguished from the *sender* thereof: as also that which they commonly call *schechina*. Now many of the *Hebrews* have taught, that that *divine power* which they term *wisdom*, shall dwell in the *Messias*; whence by the *Chaldee Paraphrast*, the *Messias* is called the *Word* of *God*: as by *David*, *Esaias*, and others, He is honoured with that august Name, of GOD and LORD.

SECT. XXII.

And that a humane nature is worshipped.

WITH like facility may we answer the *other Objection*, which they alledge against us, saying, that we exhibit unto the *creature* that *worship* and *honour*, which is due unto *God* the *Creator*. For we say, that no other honour or *worship* is given by us unto the *Messias*, than is required by the *second*, and the *hundred and tenth Psalms*. The former whereof, after a sort, was fulfilled in *David*, but after a more excellent manner belongs unto the *Messias*, as *David Kimchi* himself, a great adversary of *Christians*, doth acknowledge. And the latter can be expounded of no other, but of the *Messias*. For that which some later *Jews* have devised of *Abraham*, *David*, and *Hezekiah*, is but vain and frivolous. The said *Psalm* is *David*'s, as the *Hebrew Inscription* doth shew: That then, which *David* saith, was said unto *his Lord*, can neither be applyed to *David* himself, nor to *Hezekiah*; who

who amongst *David*'s Posterity did excel *David* in nothing. And *Abraham* had no singular *Priesthood*, but was blessed of *Melchisedeck*, as the less of the greater. Likewise that which follows concerning the Scepter, that should go out of *Sion*, and come to the uttermost Coasts, doth plainly appertain unto the *Messias*, as is manifest by other like places, which doubtless are meant of the *Messias*; Nor did the more ancient *Hebrews* and Paraphrasts otherwise understand it. Now I may as well believe upon the bare credit of his Disciples, because of their most eminent integrity and honesty, that it is *Jesus* of *Nazareth*, in whom properly these things are fulfilled; as the *Jews* believe *Moses* in those matters, which without any other witness, himself affirmed were delivered to him of *God*. But besides this, there are many and most forcible *arguments* of that most excellent power, which we say *Jesus* hath obtained; As namely, in that he was seen of many, after he was risen from the dead: And many beheld him when he was taken up into *Heaven*: *Devils* also were cast out, and *diseases* were cured only by his *name*: The gifts of *Tongues* were given to his Disciples; which *Jesus* himself promised should be *signs* of his Kingdom.

Add unto these, that his *Scepter*, that is, the Word of the Gospel being gone out of *Sion*, is run through the World (and that not by humane help, but by the Divine Power alone) to the utmost parts of the Earth: whose people and their Kings He hath subdued to himself; just as the *Psalms* did plainly foretel. The *Jewish Cabalists* place a certain Son of *Enoch* in the middle, between God and Men; without any indication

of such a power: with how much better reason do we give Him that dignity, who hath so evidently demonstrated that it belongs to Him?

Neither doth this tend, in the least, to the diminution or lessening of the glory of God the Father: from whom this power of *Jesus* doth proceed; to whom it must return; and to whose honour also it ministers and serves.

SECT. XXIII.

The Conclusion of this part, with Prayer for the Jews.

BUT it is not our purpose in this Work, to make any further curious inquiry into these matters: neither had we spoken hereof, but only to shew, that there is no wicked or absurd *point* in our *Christian doctrine*, which any one can pretend, why he should not embrace a *Religion*, which is beautified and confirmed with so many *wonders*; commands such honest things; and promises such excellent *rewards*. For he that hath once received and embraced the same, must for further *instruction* in special and particular *questions*, consult those *Books*, wherein, as we have formerly declared, the points of *Christian Religion* are contained; which that it may come to pass, we beseech the *Almighty* to *illuminate* the hearts and minds of the *Jews* with the brightness of his *truth*, and to make those prayers effectual which *Christ* himself uttered for them, even while he was hanging upon the *Cross*.

The

The Sixth Book OF THE TRUTH OF Christian Religion.

SECT. I.

A confutation of Mahumetaniſm: the beginning of it.

THE Sixth Book, which is oppoſed to the *Mahumetans*, inſtead of a Preface, deduces the Judgments of GOD againſt Chriſtians, unto the very beginning and riſe of *Mahumetaniſm*: ſhewing, that is, how that ſincere and ſimple piety (which flouriſhed among Chriſtians, even when they were moſt grievouſly vexed and oppreſſed) began by little and little to wax cold; from the time that by the favour of *Conſtantine*, and the following Emperors, that profeſſion was become not only ſafe, but alſo honourable: the World being, as it were, thruſt into the Church. For

For *first* of all, Christian Princes would needs continue fighting, and make no end of their Wars: even then, when they might have enjoyed peace and quietness.

Among the Bishops also, there were most sharp Contentions about the chiefest Sees. And as at the beginning the greatest mischiefs insued, upon the preferring of the Tree of *knowledge*, before the Tree of *Life*; even so then also was curious Learning more regarded than a godly Life, and Religion turned into an Art. The consequent of which was, that, after the example of those, who built the Tower of *Babel*, a rash affectation of things out of their reach, bred jarring and confusion in their Language; together with discord one with another. Which the common People observing, and not knowing oft-times which way to turn themselves, they threw the blame upon the holy Scriptures; and began to avoid them, as hurtful and dangerous.

Religion also began every where to be placed not in purity of mind, but, as if *Judaism* was brought back into the World, in Rites and Ceremonies: and in such things as contain rather an exercise of the body, than any amendment of the mind: and in an eager zeal for that Party and side, which they had once chosen. Till at length it came to pass: that there were every where many Christians in Name: but very few in Deed.

GOD did not wink at these Vices of his People, but, out of the innermost parts of *Scythia* and *Germany*, poured forth, like a Deluge, immense swarms of Barbarous People into the Christian World. And when the vast slaughters, which they made, proved not sufficient to correct

rect and amend the lives of those that survived; *Mahomet*, by God's just permission, sowed a new Religion in *Arabia*: and that directly opposite to the Christian Religion; but which in words expressed, in a manner, the life of the greatest part of Christians.

This Religion was first entertained by the *Saracens*; who had revolted from *Heraclius* the Emperour: and by their Arms subdued, in a short space, *Arabia*, *Syria*, *Palestine*, *Egypt*, *Persia*; and afterward possessed themselves of *Africa*, and, beyond the Sea, of *Spain* also. But the power of the *Saracens* was abated, as by others, so chiefly by the *Turks*; a Nation also very Warlike: which, after long combates with the *Saracens*, being invited to Peace, easily embraced a Religion suited to their manners; and transferred the Majesty of the Empire to themselves. The Cities of *Asia* and *Greece* were taken, and, by the growing success of their Arms, they came into *Hungary*, and the Borders of *Germany*.

SECT. II.

The overthrow of the foundation of Mahumetanism, in denying inquiry into Religion.

THIS *Religion* altogether contrived for the shedding of blood, delights much in Rites and Ceremonies, and would be believed without all liberty of *enquiry* thereinto; whence the Vulgar

Vulgar are prohibited to read their Books, that are accounted *holy*. Which thing is a manifest argument of the *iniquity* thereof; For justly may that *Merchandise* be suspected, which is obtruded upon this condition, that it be not lookt into.

It is true indeed, there is not in all Men a like *capacity* or knowledge, and quick *insight* into all things; many being led into error by *pride*; others by inordinate passion or affection; and some by custom. But the *divine goodness* forbids us to think, that those Men cannot know and find the way to *eternal salvation*, who seek it, not for any by-respect of *profit* or *honour*, but with submission of themselves, and all they have unto *God*, imploring his assistance for the obtaining of the same. And since that *God* hath implanted in the *mind* of Man the power and faculty of judging, there is no part of *truth* that better deserves the imployment thereof, than *that* of which we cannot be ignorant, without the danger of losing *eternal salvation*.

SECT. III.

A Proof against the Mahumetans, taken out of the Books of the Hebrews and Christians, which are not corrupted.

IT is granted by *Mahomet* and his followers, that *Moses* was sent of *God*; and *Jesus* also: and that they were holy Men, which first of all published the *doctrine* of *Jesus*. But in the *Alcoran*, which is *Mahomet*'s law, many things are recorded

recorded plain contrary to what is delivered by *Moses*, and by the Disciples of *Jesus*. Thus to give one example for many, all the *Apostles* and Disciples of *Christ*, with one consent do *testifie*, that *Jesus* was *crucified*; that the third day he was restored to *life* again, and after that was *seen* of many. But *Mahomet* teacheth quite contrary: namely, that *Jesus* was privily conveyed into *Heaven*: and not himself, but something in his *likeness* was nailed to the *Cross*; and consequently, he did not die; but the sight of the *Jews* was deluded and deceived.

This Objection cannot be put off, unless *Mahomet* say, (as he doth) that the Books of *Moses*, and of *Christ*'s Disciples, have not remained as they were at first; but have been *corrupted*. But we have confuted this *fiction* before, in the third Book.

Without doubt, if any Man should say, that the *Alcoran* is corrupted, the *Mahumetans* would deny it, and say, that were an answer sufficient to those that could not prove the contrary: But they cannot moreover, for the integrity of their Book, alledge such *arguments*, as we do produce, concerning the several Copies, that were in a short space dispersed throughout the World; and that, not as the *Alcoran*, in one Language; which *Copies* were preserved by the fidelity of so many *Sects*, that varied much about other matters.

The *Mahumetans* are perswaded, that in the fourteenth Chapter of St. *John*, where mention is made of sending the *Comforter*, there hath been something registred concerning *Mahomet*, which the *Christians* have razed out. But here let me ask of them, whether they think this *depra-va-*

pravation of *Scripture* was committed since the time of *Mahomet*, or before.

That it hapned not after the coming of *Mahomet*, is plain, because ever since that time there have been in the World very many *Copies*, not only in the *Greek* Language, but in in the *Syriac*, *Arabick*, and in parts far distant from *Arabia*, the *Ethiopick* and *Latin* Tongues of divers *translations*: all which do so agree in that place, as there cannot be shewn any diversity at all. And before the time of *Mahomet*, there was no cause of alteration: For no Man could know before his coming what *Mahomet* would teach. Yea, if the *doctrine* of *Mahomet* had contained nothing contrary to the doctrine of *Jesus*, the *Christians* would have made no more difficulty to receive his *Books*, than they did to receive the *Books* of *Moses* and the *Hebrew Prophets*. Or suppose there had been nothing written either of the *doctrine* of *Jesus* or of *Mahomet*: It is but equity that *that* be received for the *doctrine* of *Jesus*, which all *Christians* generally *agree upon*; and *that* for the *doctrine* of *Mahomet*, which all *Mahumetans* do allow of.

SECT. IV.

By comparing Mahomet with Christ in their Persons.

IN the next place, let us compare the *adjuncts* and *qualities* of both their *Doctrines*, to the end we may see whether of the two is to be preferred before the other: And first, let us consider the

the *authors*. As for *Jesus*, *Mahomet* himself confesseth, that he was the *Messias*, which was promised in the *Law* and in the *Prophets*; whom the same *Mahomet* calls the *word*, the *mind* and the *wisdom* of *God*; saying also, that he had no *Father* of Mankind. But *Mahomet* (as his own Followers believe) was generated and begot according to the ordinary course of nature. The life of *Jesus* was altogether *unblameable*, there being no crime that could be objected against him: But *Mahomet* a long time was a *Robber*, and always *effeminate*: *Jesus* ascended into *Heaven*, as *Mahomet* confesseth; but *Mahomet* lies yet intombed in his *Sepulcher*. Who then sees not whether of them is to be followed?

SECT. V.

And in their Deeds.

NEXT the *dignity* of their Persons, consider we *their acts*. *Jesus* gave sight to the blind, *health* to them that were sick, and made the *lame* to walk; yea, by *Mahomet*'s own confession, he raised some from the dead. But *Mahomet* saith of himself, that he was sent, not with *miracles*, but with Arms. Howbeit some of his Followers ascribe to him *miracles* also: But what kind, I pray? Only such as may either be done by *humane art*; as that of a *Dove*, which came flying to his *ear*: or such as had no *witnesses*, as that of a *Camel*, which is said to have had some *conference* with him by night: or lastly, such as are confuted by their own absurdity; as that a great

great part of the *Moon* fell into his *lap*, or into his sleeve; which he, to restore roundness to that Star, sent back again to it. Now, who will not say, that in a *doubtful case*, we ought to adhere to that Law, which hath the surer and more certa in Testimonies of Divine approbation?

SECT. VI.

Also such as first embraced both Religions.

NEXT, let us see who, and what manner of Persons they were, that first received these several *laws*. They that first embraced the *law* of *Jesus*, were such as feared *God*, Men of a plain and innocent life: Now it stands not with the *goodness* of *God* to suffer such men to be gull'd and cheated, either by bewitching speeches, or by an appearance of Miracles. But they that first received *Mahumetanism* were Thieves and Robbers; Men estranged from all *humanity* and *piety*.

SECT. VII.

The manner how both their Laws were propagated.

IN the next place follows, the *manner* how both these *Religions* were *propagated* and spread abroad. As for *Christianity*, we have shewn more than once that it was enlarged and amplified by the *miracles*, not only of *Christ*, but also of

of his *Disciples*, and those that *succeeded* them: as likewise by the very *patient enduring* of the torments and punishments that *Christians* suffered. But the *Doctors* of *Mahumetanism* wrought no *miracles* at all: neither did they suffer any grievous persecutions, or cruel kinds of *death* for their *profession*: But it is a Religion which follows, where Arms go before: of which it is an accessary, and nothing of it self. Nor do they themselves bring any better *argument* for the *truth* thereof, than their *good success* in their Wars, and the *largeness* of their Empire; than which nothing in this point is more *deceitful* and uncertain.

They condemn the *worship* and services of the *Pagans*: and yet we know what great victories were won by the *Persians*, *Macedonians* and *Romans*; and how ample their Dominions were. Neither have the *Mahumetans* themselves had always *good success* with their Armies. The slaughters and great overthrows that they have received in many places, both by *Sea* and by *Land* are not unknown. They are now *banished* quite out of all *Spain*.

There is nothing that is liable to such uncertain *alterations*, nothing that may be *common* both to good and bad; which can be a certain *note* of *true Religion*: much less can their Arms, which are so *unjust*, that oftentimes they fall upon *people*, that do not any way molest or offend them, nor are known to them by any injury; in so much that all the *pretence* they have for their Arms, is only Religion; which is most irreligious.

For there is no *true worship* of *God*, but what proceeds from a *willing mind*. And the will is

to be wrought upon by *good instruction* and gentle *perswasion*, but not by *threats* or violence. He that is *compelled* to believe, doth not believe at all, but plays the *hypocrite*, and feigns himself to *believe*, that he may escape and avoid some danger or punishment. And he that by threats or sense of *punishment*, will force another Man's assent, shews by that very proceeding, that he distrusts his *arguments*. Again, they themselves destroy this very *pretence* of *Religion*; in that they suffer any people that live under their Dominion, to use what *Religion* they please: yea, and sometimes they will openly *acknowledge*, that *Christians* may be saved by their own *Law*.

SECT. VIII.

The Precepts of both Religions compared.

FUrthermore, let us compare the several *commandments* of both *Religions*: the one whereof commandeth *patience*, yea, and *love* even to them that *hate* us: But the other, revenge. In the one the bond of *matrimony* is kept firm and inviolable between the married parties, by a *mutual bearing* with one anothers humors: But in the other there is licence granted to depart and be *divorced*. Here the Husband performs himself what he requires of his *Wife*, and by his own example *teacheth her* to fasten her affection upon *him alone*: But there they may have *Wives* after *Wives*, there being still new incentives and fresh provocations to lust. Here, *Religion* is planted *within*, and rooted in the very heart and *Soul*,

Soul, that it being well cultivated, may bring forth *fruit* profitable for *Mankind*: but there *Religion* spends almost its whole force in *Circumcision*, and in some other things, that of themselves are neither *good* nor *bad*. Finally here, in *Christianity*, a moderate use of Meats and Wine is allowed of: but there in *Mahumetanism* Men are forbidden to eat *Swines flesh*, and to drink *Wine*: which notwithstanding is a great gift of *God*, beneficial both for body and mind, if it be soberly taken.

And truly, it is no wonder, if some *childish rudiments* were taught before the most perfect *law*, as that of *Christ* is: but after the *promulgation* thereof, to return again to *types* and *figures* were preposterous. Neither can any just reason be given why, after *Christian Religion*, which is far the best, it should be fit that any other should be brought forth.

SECT. IX.

Answer to the Mahumetans Objection, concerning the Son of God.

THE *Mahumetans* tell us, they are not a little displeased with us, for saying, that *God* hath a *Son*, seeing he useth not a *Wife*: As though the word *Son* could not have a more divine *signification* in *God*. But *Mahomet* himself attributes many things as *dishonourable* and ill-beseeming *God*, as if he should be said to have a *Wife*.

Thus he saith, that *God* had a *cold hand*, which himself *knew* by experience: that *God* was carried in a *chair*, and the like.

Howbeit, when we say, that *Jesus* is the Son of *God*, we do but signifie the same thing that he means, when he calls him the *word* of *God*: For the *word* is after a sort begotten of the *mind*. Add further, that he was born of a *Virgin*, only by the *operation* of *God*, supplying the *vertue* or efficacy of a *Father*: that by the *power* of *God*, he was carried up into *Heaven*; all which being confessed even by *Mahomet* himself, do shew that *Jesus* by a singular prerogative and peculiar right, may and ought to be called the *Son* of *God*.

SECT. X.

Many absurd things in the Books of Mahumetans.

BUT on the other side, it would be *long* to relate how many things there are, contrary to the truth of *history*; and many things very *ridiculous* in the *writings* of the *Mahumetans*. Such is that *fable* of a fair and beautiful *Woman*, that learned a solemn *charm* or Song of some Angels that were drunk, whereby she was wont to ascend into the Sky, and likewise descend again; and ascending once a great height into Heaven, she was caught of *God*, and there fixed, and made that Star which is called *Venus*.

Like to this, is that of a *mouse* in *Noah*'s Ark, that was bred of an *Elephant*'s Dung: and a *Cat* of the breath of a *Lion*.

More

More specially, that most *notorious fiction*, concerning *Death* to be changed into a *Ram*, that must remain in the middle space between *Heaven* and *Hell*: And the Fable of sweating out their good chear in the other life: When likewise (they imagine) there shall be whole *troops* of *Women* assigned to every *Man* for pleasure of *carnal copulation*. All which are so very egregious absurdities, that whosoever believes them, deserves to be *stupified* and given over to a *reprobate sense* for his iniquity; specially such a one as lives where the *light* of the *Gospel* shineth.

SECT. XI.

A Conclusion directed unto Christians, admonishing them of their duty, upon the occasion of what hath formerly been handled.

AND thus having ended this last *disputation* against the *Mahumetans*, there follows a conclusion of the whole, not to aliens or strangers, but to all sorts of *Christians*, of what Name, Nation, or Quality soever they be: Shewing briefly the *use* or *application* of what hath hitherto been delivered; to the end those things may be followed and sought after, which are *good*; and on the contrary, the *evil* eschewed.

First of all, that they lift up *pure hands* and *hearts* unto that *God*, who of nothing made all *visible* and *invisible* things; having sure confidence in him, that his *providence* and *care* watcheth over us; seeing that without his *permission*,

not so much as a *Sparrow* falls to the ground. And let them not *fear* those which can only kill the *body*, but rather let them *fear* him that hath like *power* both over *soul* and *body*. And let them not only trust in *God* the *Father*, but also in *Jesus Christ* his *Son*, since there is no other *name* upon Earth, by which we can be saved: And this they may rightly do, if they be verily perswaded that *eternal life* is prepared, not for such as in *word* only call *God* their *Father*, and *Jesus* their *Lord*, but for such as frame their life according to the *will* of *Jesus*, and their *Father* which is in *Heaven*.

Furthermore, *Christians* are admonished faithfully, and with due care to preserve the *doctrine* of *Christ*, as a most *precious treasure*: And for this cause, let them often *read* and *meditate* the Books of the *Holy Scripture*, whereby no Man can be *deceived*, unless first he *deceive* himself. For the Authors and Pen-men of those Writings were more *just* and full of Divine Inspiration, than that they would deprive us of necessary *truths*, or cover and *conceal* the same with any clouds.

Howbeit, for the right *understanding* hereof, we must bring a mind disposed and prepared to obedience: which if we do, then nothing shall be hid from us, which ought to be *believed*, *hoped* for, or done by us: And by this means, that *holy Spirit* will be cherished and excited in us, which is given us for a *pledge* and earnest of our future happiness.

Moreover, I deterr *Christians* from imitating the Pagans: first, in their worship of false *Gods*, which are nothing but vain *names*, which evil Dæmons use to alienate our minds and affections from

from the *worship* of the *true God*. Wherefore we cannot possibly participate with them in their *services*, and expect to receive benefit by the *Sacrifice* of *Christ*. Secondly, neither may the *Christians* imitate the Heathen in their licentious and dissolute manner of *life*; having no other Law, than what is suggested by *lust*, and prompted by sensual desire: from which Christians ought to be far removed; who should not only far excel the vitious and prophane *Pagans*, but likewise the *Lawyers* and *Pharisees* among the *Jews*; whose righteousness consisting only in some outward *performances*, could never bring them to the heavenly *Kingdom*.

Circumcision that is made with hands, is now nothing worth, but it is the inward *Circumcision* of the heart, the keeping of *Gods commandments*, the *new* creature, *faith* that is perfected in love, which make Men known to be *true Israelites* and *mystical Jews*, that is, praisers of *God*, and *commendable* in his sight. The distinction of *meats*, the *Sabbaths* and *feast-days* were but types and shadows of things, which exist in *Christ* and in *Christians*.

In like manner, by occasion of *Mahumetism*, these Admonitions are given, that our Lord *Jesus* foretold, that after his time there should arise *false Christs* and false *Prophets*, which should *lye*, and say they were sent of God. But suppose that an *Angel* should come from *Heaven*, yet we may not receive or entertain any other *doctrine* than that which *Christ* hath left us, *confirmed* by so many *testimonies*. For *God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners spake unto the godly that lived in times past, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son*, the Lord of all things, the

brightneſs of his *Fathers glory*, and the expreſs *Image* of his ſubſtance, by whom all things are *created* that ever were or ſhall be; who upholdeth and governeth all things by his *power*, and having *purged* our ſins, is now ſet at the right hand of *God*, and hath obtained a dignity above Angels: and therefore nothing can be expected more magnificent than this *Law-giver*.

Upon the ſame occaſion *Chriſtians* are remembred, that the *weapons* of *Chriſt* and of their *Chriſtian warfare*, are not ſuch as *Mahomet* uſed, but *ſpiritual*, able to caſt down *ſtrong holds*, and every thing that exalteth it ſelf againſt the *knowledge* of *God*. For our *buckler*, we have the ſhield of *faith*, whereby we may repel the fiery darts of the *Devil*: For a *breſt-plate* we have *righteouſneſs*, or integrity of life: The *hope* of eternal ſalvation is a helmet, which may cover the *weakeſt part*: And for a Sword, we have Words delivered from God, which pierce into the moſt *inward* parts of the *Soul*.

After this, follows the *exhortation* to mutual *concord*, which *Chriſt* at his departure ſo *ſolemnly*, and with ſuch *earneſtneſs* commended unto his *Diſciples*. There ought not to be *many Maſters* and *Doctors* amongſt us, but we muſt have one *Maſter*, even *Jeſus Chriſt*. All *Chriſtians* are baptized unto one *name*, wherefore there ought to be no *Sects* or *Diviſions* among them: for the cure and remedy of which *evils*, thoſe Apoſtolical ſayings are ſuggeſted; as, *let no man think more highly of himſelf than he ought to think*; but let Men be wiſe with *ſobriety*, according as *God* hath dealt to every Man the meaſure of *faith*. If any do not ſo well conceive and rightly *underſtand* all things as they ought, then

their

their *weakneſs* muſt be born with: that ſo without any brawlings or fallings out, they may be ſweetly united and knit together with us. If any do excel the reſt in *underſtanding*, it is but meet alſo that they ſurpaſs them in love, in holy *affection* and *endeavours* to do them good. And as for thoſe that in ſome points are of *different opinion* from ſuch as hold the *truth*; *God*'s leiſure muſt be waited for, until it pleaſe him to reveal the ſame *truth*, that yet lies hid from them: and in the mean while thoſe things which are agreed upon, muſt be ſtedfaſtly kept and duly practiſed.

We know now in part only, but the time ſhall come, when all things ſhall be known moſt plainly, and after a perſpicuous manner. This alſo I beg of every one, that they do not *unprofitably* detain the *talent* committed to them upon truſt; but that they *endeavour* by all means poſſible to *win* others unto *Chriſt*. For which purpoſe, we muſt not only uſe good exhortations, and wholſome *ſpeeches*, but alſo the *example* of good life; that ſo the *goodneſs* of our *Maſter* may appear by his *ſervants*, and the purity of the *law* by our *laudable actions*.

Laſtly, my Diſcourſe returning thither, where it began, I intreat ſuch Readers, as are my Country-men, that if hereby they reap any *good*, they would give *thanks* to *God* for it: And if any thing be leſs pleaſing to them, they would have a regard both to the *common infirmity* of *man*'s nature, that is prone to *errour*; and to the *time* and *place* wherein this work was rather haſtily brought forth, than elaborately compoſed.

THE

THE SEVENTH BOOK OF THE TRUTH OF Christian Religion: Against the present ROMAN CHURCH.

The SEVENTH Book OF THE TRUTH OF Christian Religion.

SECT. I.

An Introduction, shewing what makes the Addition of another Book necessary.

IF those Apostolical Exhortations, which conclude the last Book, had been carefully followed; there would have been no need of saying any more, for the confirmation of Mens minds in the belief of the Truth and Certainty of the Christian Religion. But the unhappy differences which are among Christians, and which are maintained with unspeakable animosities and hatreds (nay with anathema's also, which one part pronounces against the rest) have made many Men doubtful which of these hold the true Christian Faith, for which the Apostle exhorts us

us moſt earneſtly to contend; and in this doubtfulneſs, there are ſome who embrace none at all.

For we ſee the Eaſtern Church disjoynted from the Weſtern: and the Weſtern divided into *three* great parts, every one of which condemn the other two: and all of them are ſubdivided into ſeveral little parties by variety of opinions; for which they contend with the ſame zeal, that they do for the Faith of Chriſt. Which is thereby diſgraced; and reputed by ſome to be of no greater certainty, than thoſe dubious opinions.

SECT. II.

Diviſions among Chriſtians, no ſuch objection againſt Chriſtianity, as is imagined.

BUT to a conſidering Man, this will be no occaſion of ſcandal: but rather confirm him more in the true Chriſtian Faith; which every one of us ought to preſerve with the greateſt care, as a moſt ineſtimable Treaſure. For, as this is common to every Religion, to have many diſputes about it, and different opinions in it; and as Chriſt and his Apoſtles foretold there would many *falſe Chriſts* and *falſe Apoſtles*, and *falſe Prophets* ariſe (as was ſaid before in the end of the foregoing Book) who would lye, and ſay they were ſent, when they were not, introducing falſe doctrines, and calling them by the Name of his Religion; and as they give us a good reaſon alſo why it ſhould be ſo; that Mens probity and ſincerity might be tried, and brought hereby to the touchſtone, and that their diligence

gence and care in preserving themselves might be exercised: So, blessed be our Lord, the true Christian Religion is still retained, and kept intire every where, by all these disagreeing Parties; notwithstanding the fierce quarrels they have one with another. As appears by this (which is a short, easie, and certain way to our satisfaction in this matter) that the Faith into which they are all baptized, is one and the same without any variation. That is, they all enter into the Church at the very same gate; and upon the same terms and conditions, neither more nor less, are made members of Christ, and have a title given them, if they live according to this Faith, unto Eternal Salvation.

SECT. III.

As appears even in the Roman Church, which hath given the greatest scandal.

THE Church of *Rome* it self, which now makes the greatest differences in the Christian World, requires nothing more at this day to be believed by those, that are by Baptism received into the Church of Christ; but only those things which are contained in the *Creed*, commonly called the Apostles. This *Creed* is recited there by the Priest, and this alone, when he comes to the Font; and he interrogates the Persons to be baptized (if they be adult) or their undertakers (if they be Infants) about no other belief. Upon the profession of which, he bids them enter into the holy Church of God, that they

they may receive the Celestial blessing from the Lord Jesus Christ, and have a part with Him and with his Saints: And having again examined adult Persons, asking them, *Do you believe in God the Father Almighty*, &c. and mentioning no other Articles of Faith, he baptizes them; and declares them to be regenerate, and to have remission of all sins. And so do we do here; nor is there any different practice in any other part of the Christian World; but every where it is sufficient to consent to this Creed: which is nothing but a brief explication, what we are to believe concerning the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost*, in whose Name we are baptized.

If there were any thing beyond this, which we are necessarily bound to believe, it should have been then propounded when we were admitted into the state of Christianity. For Baptism gives us a right and title to Salvation (if we do not forfeit it afterward by Apostasie, or by a wicked life) and this Faith (with a promise to live according to it) gives us a right to Baptism.

Herein indeed the *Roman* Church contradicts it self, in decreeing many other Articles of belief, without which it declares Men cannot be saved; and yet receiving Men at Baptism into a state of Salvation, without demanding their consent to any such Articles. But so they do in many other things, and cannot avoid it: while they forsake the ancient Universal Rule; and set up their own private Authority, to impose what they please, under pain of Damnation.

SECT.

SECT. IV.

But both contradicts it self, and departs from the Ancient and truly Catholick Church.

FOR that no such things, as they would now oblige all Christians to believe, were anciently exacted, it appears most manifestly by *Irenæus* and *Tertullian* (to name no others) in several places. Who call the *Creed* now mentioned, *the Rule of Truth, and the Rule of Faith*: which the Church throughout all the World, saith *Irenæus* (*though it be dispersed to the most extream parts of the Earth*) *received from the Apostles and their Disciples: and believes, as if there were but one Soul and one Heart, in so many Men: and with a perfect consent preaches and teaches, and delivers these things, as having but one mouth. For though there be divers Languages in the World, yet one and the same Tradition prevails every where: For neither the Churches in* Germany *believe otherways, or deliver any thing else; nor they in* Spain, *nor they in* France; *nor they in the* East; *nor they in* Egypt; *nor they in* Libya; *nor they that are founded in the midst of the World. But as the Sun is one and the same in the whole World: So is the preaching of the Truth, inlightning all Men, who will come to the knowledge of it. And neither he who is most eloquent among the Governours of the Church, preaches any thing different, (for no man is above his Master) nor doth he that is weakest in speech lessen in the least this Tradition. For there being one and the same Faith, he that hath most to say cannot inlarge it; nor he that hath least, diminish it.*

Thus they declared their minds in those early days: when there was no Catholick Man or Woman in the World, required to believe any of those Doctrines, now in controversie between us and the *Roman* Church: (and set down in the *Creed* of Pope *Pius* IV. as necessary to Salvation) but they all contented themselves with the simple belief of those things which the Apostles have delivered in their Creed; the greatest Men in the Church delivering no more, nor the meanest saying less. And with this wise and good Men satisfied themselves in times succeeding, as appears by this remarkable passage of St. *Hilary* in his little Book, which he himself delivered to the Emperor *Constantius*. Where he thus complains, *Faith is now inquired after; as if we had none. Faith must be set down in writing; as if it were not in the heart. Being regenerated by Faith, we are now taught what to believe; as if that regeneration could have been without Faith.* WE LEARN CHRIST AFTER BAPTISM; AS IF THERE COULD HAVE BEEN ANY BAPTISM, WITHOUT FAITH IN CHRIST.

SECT. V.

Christianity therefore is not there in its purity; but much corrupted.

WHICH is a sufficient Argument to prove that the Christian Religion is not sincerely preserved in that Church: and ought to with-hold us from joyning with them, in imposing thus upon the Christian World; and thereby

thereby breaking the bond of Unity; and turning Men away from the Faith, by the palpable falsities and absurd mixtures, which are brought into it; and that as necessary parts of the Faith of Christ. To the adulterating of which we ought by no means to consent; but maintain it in that purity, wherein the Apostles delivered it to their Successors: as we find it set down in the Works of a great many following Doctors of the Church; whose Names I forbear, but are ready at hand to make good what I quoted just now out of *Irenæus*. Who acknowledges him for a sincere Christian, *who holds fast* τὸν κανόνα τῆς ἀληθείας (as *Epiphanius* recites his words, which were then extant in *Greek*) *that Rule of Faith, which he received in Baptism, firm and unmoveable.* He cannot be a *Heretick* who thus believes on the Son of *God*, in the sense wherein the *Nicene* Creed (not adding any new Article of Faith, but only declaring what was believed from the beginning) hath explained the Word: But they are *Schismaticks* who call him so; and will not admit him into their Communion, unless he consent to other things, and hold them to be equally certain, and necessary, with the Ancient Rule of Faith.

SECT. VI.

Answer to an Evasion from the force of the foregoing Argument.

TO pretend that all those Articles of Faith, which they now impose, though not expressly mentioned in the Creed, yet are contained in one Article of it, viz. *in the belief of the holy Catholick Church*; is, in effect, to make all the rest of the Creed unnecessary, and to establish this sole Rule of Faith in the room of it. For if by believing the Catholick Church, we are to understand, as they would have us, whatsoever the Catholick Church propounds: then it had been enough to have said to those *Catechumens* that came for Baptism, *Do you believe in the Holy Catholick Church?* and to add any more had been utterly superfluous.

But the vanity of this further appears, in that none of the ancient Doctors who have expounded the Creed (and there are many of them) have given any such sense of that Article of the *Catholick Church*: Nay, it was not in the most ancient forms of Faith: nor doth the Church truly Catholick teach any thing as necessary to be believed to Salvation, but what is contained in the Creed. For we do, in their own sence, believe the *Catholick Church*; but not the *Roman Catholick Church* (which their Creed will have to be the Mother and Mistress of all Churches:) because, to omit many other absurdities which are in it, there was a *Catholick* Church before there was a *Roman*: and to say, that they believe

believe the Catholick Church, meaning thereby the *Roman*, is nothing more than to say, they believe themselves.

SECT. VII.

Their absurd Explication of the Unity of the Catholick Church.

NOTHING therefore can be further from the Truth, than that Explication of *the Unity of the Catholick Church*; which is delivered in the *Roman Catechism*, published by the Authority of the same Pope *Pius* IV. in pursuance of the Council of *Trent*. Wherein the *Catechumen* is taught to believe and profess, that the Catholick Church is one, not only because of one Faith (and other reasons mentioned by the Apostle, *Ephes.* iv.) and because it is subject to one invisible Governour, which is Christ: But, *because it is subject also to one visible Governor, who holds the Roman Chair, the legitimate Successor of St.* Peter. *Concerning whom it is the unanimous opinion of all the Fathers, that this visible Head is necessary to constitute, and conserve the Unity of the Church. And to this Head or Pastor, Christ hath given the authority of ruling and governing the whole Church, as the Vicar and Minister of his Power.*

Thus that *Catechism* teaches, in the First Part, the IX. Article, *n.* 11, 12, 13. Which (besides that it is confuted by the plain demonstration now mentioned; that Christ had a Catholick Church, which had Unity in it self, when there

was no *Roman* Church) is directly contrary to the constant Doctrine, not only of the Scripture; but of all the Fathers; (whose consent they falsly boast of) and of many Popes of *Rome*; and of Councils also, both General, and particular; even of the Councils of *Lateran* and *Trent*; which by approving the *Five First* General Councils, who condemn this Supremacy of the Bishop of *Rome*, do in effect condemn it themselves.

SECT. VIII.

Which forbids us to joyn in Communion with them upon such Terms.

TO that Church then we ought to adhere, which hath kept the Rule of Faith, once delivered to the Saints, simple and unmixed with humane inventions. Which if we admit, as necessary to Salvation; we betray the truth of Christ, and are false and unjust to innumerable Christian Brethren: who by Baptism are admitted into a state of Salvation, but hereby unmercifully cut off from the Body of Christ; though they have that Faith, which makes them true Members of it.

This is the Great Crime of the *Roman* Church; and may suffice, instead of all other demonstrations, to prove that they have corrupted themselves, and departed from the simplicity that is in Christ. For this very Article alone (which is a part of their Faith) that there is no Salvation, but by union with the *Roman* Catholick Church,

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and that by subjection to it; thrusts out of Heaven, not only the ancient Christian pious Emperors, who refused such subjection: But many of their ancient Popes, who acknowledged their subjection was due to the Christian Emperors; together with the ancient Patriarchs and Fathers, assembled in many Councils; and the most famous Christian Churches; the most glorious Martyrs and Saints of Christ, that the best times of Christianity have known; and, to say nothing of after Ages, the present Christians of *Greece*, *Russia*, *Armenia*, *Syria*, *Ethiopia*; who by this Article of subjection to the *Catholick Roman Church*, are all excluded from Christian communion, and must perish everlastingly.

For *Bellonius* says, that in his travels he met with *Nine* sorts of Christians at *Jerusalem*; Eight of which Nine know nothing of this Universal Bishop, or do not regard him: and of the Ninth, there is scarce half that acknowledges his Authority.

And yet there are Men among them, of no mean note and number, who have the confidence to tell us, that by the *Catholick Church*, which we are bound to believe, is to be understood the Bishop of *Rome*: whose Declarations, when he will determine any thing to be of Faith, we all ought to receive. And though we are assured, as much as we are that there was such a Person as St. *Peter*, that Christ never gave him (much less his Successors) any Authority at all over his whole Church: Yet now, to deny the Pope's Supremacy is such a Heresie, that let a Man be never so Orthodox in all other points of the Catholick Faith, this alone is sufficient to make him be excommunicated and cut off from the Body of Christ.

Witneſs our King *Henry* VIII. who was excommunicated, and his Kingdom given away for no other fault, by a Bull of *Paul* the *Third*: who affirms in the beginning of that Bull, that herein he acted by Divine authority; *which* (according as God ſaith in the Prophet *Jeremiah*) *had ſet him over Nations and Kingdoms, to root up and deſtroy, as well as to build and plant; having the ſupreme power over all Kings and People, throughout the whole Earth.* Which certainly is ſuch new Language, never known in the Church for many Ages; that they who are not convinced thereby of the corruption of Chriſtian Religion in the *Roman* Church, have their Eyes blinded with the Worldly Splendor of it.

SECT. IX.

But on the other ſide, not to ſlight Epiſcopal Authority.

YET on the other hand, it muſt be acknowledged, that this enormous power which they have uſurped, is a very ſtrong proof of the high Authority of Chriſtian Biſhops in the Church; and of the great reverence that was paid to them by Chriſtian People. Who otherways would never have thus ſubmitted to their will and pleaſure; had not the obedience which they had been wont always to yield to their authority, diſpoſed them to be brought by little and little under an abſolute ſubjection.

Nor would there have been reaſon for thoſe Cautions, which St. *Peter* gives to the Governors

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of God's Church (not at *Rome*, but elsewhere, 1 *Pet.* 5. 2, 3.) *not to Lord it over them*: if they had not been invested with a power, which all Christians reverenced so much, that it might more easily be abused, than contemned; and sooner perswade People to follow them with a blind obedience, than to slight their judgment, and refuse to conform to their Injunctions.

And therefore whosoever they are that now despise all Ecclesiastical Authority, we may be sure they have swerved from the true Principles of Christianity: and they also are altogether inexcusable, who shake off the Episcopal Government, and refuse to be subject to it, under a pretence that there ought to be an equality among Christ's Ministers. Which as it is against the practice of the whole Church for many Ages, from the beginning: So directly opposes the Institution of Christ, who set his Apostles in a superiority to the LXX; as his Apostles set such Men as *Timothy* and *Titus* in a superiority over the Presbyteries of those Churches, which they could no longer attend themselves.

SECT. X.

Arguments enough in the foregoing Books, to prove the true Christian Religion not to be sincerely preserved in the Roman Church: one is their way of worship.

IT would be easie to shew how much the *Roman* Church hath deviated from the Rule of Faith, by considering particularly the falsity of every

every one of those Doctrines which they have added to the ancient Creeds. But it will be more proper, in so short a Treatise as this, only to bring to the Readers mind some Principles in the foregoing Books; which direct us as plainly to reject Popery, (and upon the very same ground) as those false Religions, for whose confutation he alledges them.

And *First*, let the Reader again weigh his Arguments against the worship of the *Pagans*, and he will find them, in several things, as strong against the worship of the *Roman* Church: whose practices, it will hereby appear, are no less faulty than their Faith. As for example, in the worship of Angels, and Saints.

For the former, They should not only (as he discourses there, *Book* IV.) in their very worship make an evident difference between the most high God and those Angels to whom they commend themselves, (which they do not do in the *Roman* Church, but quite contrary, in the external acts of adoration have none that are appropriated to God alone, but are all common to him with others; as *adoration, invocation, burning incense, nay offering the Sacrifice of the Mass in their honour, and making vows to them*) but be satisfied also what order there is among the Angels; what good may be expected from each of them; and what honour the most high God is willing should be bestowed upon every one of them. All which being wanting, (for there is nothing revealed about such matters) it is plain from thence, how uncertain that Religion is, and how much safer it would be for them to betake themselves, as we do, to the worship of Almighty God alone. Especially for that, to whomsoever

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He is favourable, to them the holy Angels must needs be kind and serviceable (though no Petitions be made to them) being the Ministers and Servants of the most High: who hath revealed this to us, that He hath made them all subject to Jesus Christ; to be sent forth by Him, for the good of those who shall be heirs of Salvation. In the number of which, they, above all others, have reason to hope to be, who have so great a respect to His Majesty, and confidence in his Goodness, that for fear of offending Him, they dare worship none but Himself alone: resting assured, He will deal well with them, even for this reason; because they have such a regard to Him, as not to presume without his warrant and authority, so much as to recommend themselves to Him, by any Angel in Heaven, though never so great; but by his only begotten Son Jesus Christ alone, who is the Head of them all, and whom He hath consecrated to be our perpetual Intercessor with Him.

The like we may say of the Worship of Saints; to whom all Prayers are fruitless and vain, unless they be able to do something for their Supplicants. Of which they have no certainty; nor is there more ground to say that they can, than that they cannot; but rather less ground: since it is inconceivable how they should be able to hear and assist so many, as address themselves to the same Saint, in several far distant parts of the World: without supposing them to be equal to our blessed Saviour (for they have as many, if not more, Supplicants as He) by such an union as He hath with the Divinity.

They worship also, which is still worse, such for Saints, as never were in being; and others whose

whose Saintship there is too much reason to question, being apparently guilty of such crimes, as are inconsistent with it. For instance, our *Thomas à Becket* (by whose blood, they have prayed our Lord Christ, that they may ascend into Heaven; and do still pray, (upon *Decemb.* 29.) that they who implore his help *may have the saving effect of his Petitions*) whom our Forefathers, even in the time of Popery, lookt upon as a perjured Person, and as a Traitor: being not only called so by the King; but in Parliament accused of Treason, the Bishops as well as others being present; and the Bishop of *Wincheſter* pronouncing the sentence against him.

In short, the Devotions of the *Roman* Church are so like the ancient Idolatry; that the cunningest Man in the World cannot find any difference, without a great many nice and subtil distinctious: which in practice make no difference at all.

SECT. XI.

Another is the way of promoting their Religion.

THERE is this Argument also against it (as *Grotius* speaks of *Paganism*, Book 4. Sect. 10.) taken from the Religion it self; that if it be not supported by humane power, or policy, immediately it falls to the ground. For as the Church of *Rome* (it hath been observed by wise Men of our own) got and increased its absolute Authority over Mens consciences, by obtruding

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on the World suppositious Writings, and corrupting the Monuments of former times; by false Miracles, and forging false stories; by Wars also and Persecutions; by Massacres, Treasons and Rebellions; in short, by all manner of carnal means, whether violent or fraudulent: so take away these supports, and that Religion cannot stand by its own strength.

And truly his reason in the *Third* Section of the same Book against the *Paganish* worship, that it was from evil Spirits, because they instigated their Worshippers to destroy them that worshipped one God; holds good still (if there be any force in it) to prove the *Roman* Church not to be acted by the good Spirit of God; because they would not let those live (had they sufficient power) who worship only one God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and content themselves with the Belief before mentioned, into which they were Baptized; not presuming to superadd any thing else, as necessary to Salvation.

And, which is worse, while they have been most cruel to those, who for fear of offending God, dare not allow the worship they give to Saints, which they think belongs to him alone; nor fall down before the Sacrament and adore it, as very God Himself: They have tolerated such without any censure, who have raised St. *Francis* into an equality with, if not superiority unto our blessed Saviour; and made the blessed Virgin a kind of Goddess; nay called the *Pope* the King of Kings, and the Lord of Lords; giving him such a power over all Kings and Kingdoms, as sober Men among themselves are ashamed to own. Which is just after the example of the *Pagans*, among whom, as *Grotius* observes,

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it was lawful for the *Poets*, to ſing what they pleaſed, though never ſo lewd, concerning the Gods, and for the *Epicures* to take Providence out of the World: while the *Jews* were made ridiculous, and the Chriſtians moſt barbarouſly uſed, as if they had been the vileſt of Mankind. Of which more anon.

SECT. XII.

The Romaniſts themſelves overthrow their own Religion.

THAT argument alſo which he urges for Chriſtianity againſt the *Pagans*, that the chief Points of Chriſtian Doctrine, were acknowledged by ſome or other of the beſt and greateſt among them; may be uſed by us alſo for the Faith to which we now hold: there being ſeveral learned Writers in the *Roman* Church, who have acknowledged our belief to be ſufficient to Salvation; and the points which they have ſuperadded, having been lookt upon by the moſt excellent Perſons among them, only as meer Scholaſtical opinions; and not certain Truths, of which we can have a full aſſurance.

Here I might ſhew, how *the ſufficiency of the Scripture* hath been owned; and *the Apoſtles Creed* likewiſe confeſſed to contain all things that are abſolutely neceſſary to be believed to Salvation. But becauſe I would not have this Book ſwell above the bigneſs of the foregoing, I ſhall let them alone: and inſtance only in the Doctrine of *Tranſubſtantiation*, which is now preſſed with

with so much violence upon the Christian World; but most plainly condemned by *Gratian* in their *Canon Law*, and by the *Author*, or *Authors* of the *Canon of the Mass* it self.

About the former we may be satisfied out of the *Decretum*, if we look into the *Third* part, and the *second* Distinction, concerning *Consecration*. Where in the XLVIII. chap. out of St. *Austin* and *Prosper*, he says, *The heavenly bread, which is truly Christs flesh*, suo modo, *after a sort or manner is called the Body of Christ: whereas* revera *in truth it is the Sacrament of his Body, which was hanged upon the Cross: and the sacrificing of the flesh of Christ, by the hand of the Priest, is called his death, and passion, and crucifixion, not in the Truth of the thing, but in a signifying mystery.* Which words are so directly against the present sense of the *Roman* Church, that no Protestant can speak more expresly and clearly against it; nor desire a plainer confutation of it; unless it be that of the *Gloss* upon those words, which is this: *The celestial Sacrament, which truly represents the flesh of Christ, is said to be the Body of Christ; but improperly: whence it is said to be so*, suo modo, sed non rei veritate, *after a manner, but not in the truth of the thing. So the sense is, it is called Christs body; that is, it is signified thereby.*

And if we look further into the LII. chapter, we find he saith Christ was *sacrificed but once*, in semet ipso, *in himself, when he hung upon the Cross*, &c. *Yet is offered daily in* Sacramento, *in the Sacrament, which the Church frequents in memory of that thing.* Which Sacrifice in the next Chapter he calls *exemplum*, the example, or resemblance of that upon the Cross, offered in

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remembrance of his Death. Which is sufficient to convince us that they believed in those days, as we do now, and not as the *Roman* Church doth; else He would not have called that, which he says was truly the flesh of Christ, the *heavenly bread*. But to put all out of doubt, let us turn to the *lxxii*. Chapter, and there we find these remarkable words out of St. *Austin*, which fully explain the business, *Because it is not lawful for Christ to be devoured by our teeth, therefore our Lord would have this Bread and this Wine in a Mystery, by consecration of the Holy Spirit, to be potentially created his flesh and blood, and to be daily mystically offered for the life of the World.* They are *potentially* then or *virtually* made his Body and Blood, though but Bread and Wine in themselves: *and of this Sacrifice which is thus wonderfully made in commemoration of Christ,* (as he adds out of St. *Hier.* ch. *lxxvi.*) *it is lawful to eat*; but *of that which Christ offered on the Cross*, secundum se, *according to it self none can eat.*

But *the Canon of the Mass* will more abundantly convince us, that he or they that made it, did not believe any thing of *Transubstantiation.* For *First*, after the Consecration of the Bread and Wine, the Priest signs them *ten* times, at least, with the sign of the Cross: which can have no excuse made for it, (but is the greatest impudence) if it be indeed Christ Himself who lies before the Priest, whom he thus crosses; For sure he doth not intend to bless *Christ*, or to drive away the Devil from him, or any such like thing, for which those Crossings are used in that Church.

But more than this, (*2dly*,) it is observable, that after Consecration also, the Priest still calls Christ's Body, *Panem Sanctum*, the holy Bread

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of Eternal life; which shews that, when this *Rule* was made, they believed the Bread to be still remaining.

A further Indication of which, is, that (3*dly*) the Priest proceeds to beseech God, that He would vouchsafe to look upon that Sacrifice *of his gifts*, with a propitious and serene countenance; and to accept them, as He did the gift of his Servant *Abel*, and the Sacrifice of *Abraham*, and that which his High-Priest *Melchisedeck* offered to Him. Which is most absurdly spoken, if the Priest there offer Christ himself unto God; For then he intercedes with him for our Intercessor, as if he needed our Prayers: and besides, compares Him with the first-fruits of the Flock, and the spoils of War; which is so incongruous, and so much below his heavenly glory, that an unprejudiced Man cannot but think, they who composed that Prayer, looked upon those gifts which they offered, as still Bread and Wine.

Which appears more fully (4*thly*) from what follows in the next Prayer, where, bowing profoundly, and laying his hands upon the Altar, the Priest humbly intreats God in this manner; *Command these things to be carried by the hands of thy holy Angel, to thy high Altar, into the presence of thy Divine Majesty.* Where there are two plain testimonies against their present Doctrine. For *First*, nothing but the Bread and Wine can be called *hæc* these things; which in no propriety of speech can signifie the very natural body of Christ. Who (*secondly*) can by none of God's Angels be carried into Heaven, being there already; nor brought more than he is into the presence of the Divine Majesty, where He was before the Priest said Mass, and sits for ever there at God's right hand.

Had they that compoſed this Prayer believed any thing of *Tranſubſtantiation*, they would have ſaid, (and could not have ſaid otherways, if they ſaid any thing of this matter) *Almighty God, behold here, before me upon thy Altar, lies thy only begotten Son Jeſus Chriſt, by my ſacrifice unto Thee: that very Chriſt who is at thy right hand, I now take into my hands to preſent unto thy Majeſty, under the Form of Bread and Wine. Him thou canſt not reject, nor me his Prieſt, who offer Him unto Thee, &c.* Or ſome ſuch like words, more befitting their preſent notions, than deſiring an Angel may carry what the Prieſt offers, and preſent it unto GOD.

But we find quite contrary, which is the *laſt* thing I ſhall obſerve, that in concluſion, the Prieſt acknowledges, that by Chriſt Jeſus God always *creates, and ſanctifies and quickens, and bleſſes* (making a croſs upon the Hoſt and the Chalice, at every one of thoſe *three* laſt words) *all theſe good things.* Which can be meant of nothing but the Bread and Wine conſecrated to the commemoration and repreſentation of Chriſt's body and blood ſacrificed for us. For Chriſt's own very natural body and blood cannot in any tolerable ſenſe, be ſaid to be continually created and quickned, or made alive: unleſs you will ſuppoſe him to have been dead before, nay not to have been at all. For *creation* implies the thing not to have been; and *vivification*, not to have been then alive, when it was quickned.

Yet this fancy, *of Chriſts real preſence in the Sacrament, by Tranſubſtantiation*, againſt which there are ſuch numerous Teſtimonies in their own Communion Service, is now become the main Article of their Religion. For we all know

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to our great grief and astonishment, that when the publick Authority of this Realm was on their side, subscription was not urged to any Article of their Religion upon such violent and bloody terms, as unto this of the *Real Presence*. The Mystery of which iniquity, as a great Man of our own said, in the Age before us, cannot be better resolved than into the powerful and deceitful working of Satan; who delights thus to do despite to our Lord, and to his Religion; by seducing his professed Subjects into a belief of such things as make them and Him ridiculous unto unbelievers; and ingage them in the worst kind of Rebellion, he could imagine, by worshipping Bread and Wine instead of their Saviour: and all this upon the least occasions and shalloweſt reasons.

SECT. XIII.

Other Instances of it.

BUT besides these plain confessions of that Church against it self, there are many other things, (which I shall but just name) wherein we have the testimony of several of their own learned Men (ready to be produced) for our, and against their belief: proving clearly that the present, is not the old Religion of that Church; but that they have brought into it many Innovations: *by adding to the Canonical Books of Scripture; by making their vulgar Latin Translation of the Bible* (about which they themselves cannot agree) *authentical; by forbidding the People*

to read the holy Scriptures in their own Language; and by denying them the publick Prayers in a Language they understand; by giving the Pope, not only a new Title of Universal Bishop, but an authority and jurisdiction, which was never heard of for many Ages; by increasing the number of Sacraments, and altering their nature; by taking away the Cup from the People; and turning the Sacrament of Christs body and blood into a proper expiatory sacrifice; by celebrating the Eucharist, without any body to communicate; by setting up Images in Churches, and ordaining Religious Worship to be given to them; by invocating Saints and Angels; (as was said before) *and by the Doctrine of Purgatory, and Indulgences, and many other; together with a vast number of strange ceremonies, in the making holy water, consecrating bells,* &c. For which no antiquity can be pretended.

The woful effect of which is this (if we may speak the plain Truth) that by pressing upon Mens belief a great deal too much, and placing great vertue in trifles, they have tempted Men to believe nothing at all. As is apparent from hence; that where and when (as an excellent Writer of our own speaks) this Religion hath most absolutely commanded, there and then Atheism or Infidelity hath most abounded. And how should it do otherwise? when, as he observes, so many lying Legends have been obtruded upon Mens belief, and so many false Miracles forged to justifie them, as are very likely to make suspicious Men question the truth of all: And so many weak and frivolous ceremonies devised, and such abundance of ridiculous observances in Religion introduced, as are no less apt to beget a secret contempt and scorn of it in witty Men:

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and consequently Atheism and Impiety; if they have this perswasion setled in their mind (which is indeavoured to be rooted in them from their child-hood) that if they be not of that Religion, they were as good be of none at all: And when a great part also of the Doctrines now mentioned, so apparently make for the temporal ends of those who teach them; that sagacious Men can scarce forbear thinking, they were on purpose devised to serve those designs: That particular doctrine also of *Transubstantiation* being so portentous, that joyned with the forenamed perswasion of *No Papists no Christians*, it hath in all probability brought more than *Averroes* to this resolution; *since Christians eat that which they adore, let my Soul be among the Philosophers*: And *lastly*, the pretence which is so common, that there is no ground to believe the Scriptures, but their Churches infallibility; and yet no ground to believe their Churches infallibility, but some Texts of Scripture; being too plain a way to lead those who discern the labyrinth wherein they are, to believe neither Church nor Scripture.

SECT. XIV.

Whereby they have spoiled Christianity as the Pagans did the Natural Religion.

THESE things, which have been already urged by the Writers of our Church, for the conviction of those who are capable of it, I repeat here again; because they seem to me very

powerful for the preſervation of thoſe, who are not already tainted, or too far gone in that deluſion. Which is ſo great, (that to ſum up all belonging to this Head) we may ſafely ſay, *Popery* is juſt ſuch a depravation of the true Chriſtian Religion, as *Paganiſm* was of the Natural Religion. There cannot be a righter conception of it, than this; which appears too plainly, in the abſurd doctrines and opinions, which they have mingled with the Chriſtian Faith; in their multiplied ſuperſtitions; in their fabulous relations of the Saints, wherein they have ſurpaſſed the very *Poets* themſelves; and (to paſs by the reſt) in their proſtrating themſelves before Images; and giving religious worſhip to Men departed.

Which laſt inſtance, furniſhed the Pagans of *Cochin* with this anſwer to the Jeſuits (as *Chriſ. Borrus*, one of that Order, relates) when they preſſed upon them the belief of one God, and no more. We do believe it, ſaid they; but thoſe whom you ſee us worſhip in their Images, were Men of great Sanctity; whom pious People therefore worſhip according to their merit, juſt as you give to the Apoſtles and Martyrs and Confeſſors divers degrees of honour and religious ſervice, as you know them to have excelled in virtue and piety. And that they might confirm this to be their ſenſe of the Divinity, they bid the Jeſuits obſerve one part of the Altar in their Temple to be void of Images, and to be hid in an obſcure and dark place; which they ſaid was the proper ſeat of the moſt high God, the Maker of Heaven and Earth, who could not be repreſented in any form and ſhape; and that the Images which ſtood about that place were the repreſentations of their

Inter-

Intercessors with Him; who having great power with the most high God, did obtain many gifts and blessings for those that invocated them. How this differs from the notions of the *Roman* Church, I do not see; unless it be in this, that they have sometimes adventured to represent God himself in a shape. Otherwise the worship is the very same (the dead Men, who are the objects of it, only changed) and may very well justifie us, if we say, (and therein we speak very moderately) *that their worship is an Image, at least of the ancient Idolatry.* And moves them (to make the resemblance more perfect) unto the very same rage and violence, which was in the Pagans, against all those that differ from them, and cannot consent to worship God in that way: prosecuting them with all manner of cruelty, as if they were utter enemies of God, and of all Religion.

By which we may certainly know that they are so far from being the only true Christians, that they are a very degenerate part of *Christs* Church: wanting that great mark of his faithful Disciples, *to love one another, even as Christ loved us.* To which they are such strangers, that quite contrary, they not only hate and persecute, but endeavour, as I said, to root out those from the face of the Earth; who obediently believe all that they can find our Lord and his Apostles have delivered; and profess they are ready with all their hearts to receive and do, whatsoever any body can further teach them, to be his mind: Nay, are very desirous and diligent to know it; sparing no pains to understand the whole Truth, as it is in Christ Jesus.

SECT. XV.

Answer to what they say about Miracles.

THEY pretend indeed abundance of Miracles wrought in their Church, as a sufficient condemnation of those who obstinately refuse to invocate Saints, to worship their Images and the consecrated Host, to believe Purgatory and all other things, for the proof of which these wonders are alledged. But herein also they imitate the *Pagans*, who were guilty of the like deceit: and the same answer will serve here, which *Grotius* gives there (*L.* iv. *Sect.* 8.) in his confutation of the old Idolatry. For *First*, the wisest Men among them have rejected many of these Miracles, as not supported by the testimony of any credible witnesses; nay, as plain fictions. Others also of them, which are pretended to be of better credit, hapned in some private place, in the night, before one or two persons: whose eyes crafty Priests (as he speaks) might easily delude with false shews and counterfeit appearances of things. And further there are others which only raise admiration among People ignorant of the nature of things; and are no true miracles.

I deny not, but there may have things been done among them, which no humane power could effect by the strength of natural causes; and yet no Divine, that is, omnipotent Power be needful to their production. For those Spirits, which are interposed between God and Man, are able by their nimbleness, cunning, activity, and strength

strength to make such strange application of things (very distant) one to another, as shall astonish the Spectators with wonderful effects. But there is too great reason to think they are not good Spirits, that do these feats; because they revive hereby the ancient superstition, or uphold the Image of it still in the Christian World; to the great dishonour of our Saviour, and the indangering the Souls of his People. Who have been so far misled, as not only to fancy great Virtue in the Images of the Saints; and to cry up also some Images, particularly of our Lady (of *Loretto* for instance) as indued with some singular power and virtue, which is not to be found in others: but to honour them so highly, as for one Miracle said to be done by a *Crucifix*, to report a hundred to be wrought at such or such a Shrine of hers.

It is very considerable also (to omit the rest) which he notes, in the V. Book, out of the Law of *Moses*; that it supposes God might permit some wonders to be done, only for their trial; whether the People would persist in the worship of the true God; which had been confirmed by undoubted and far greater and more numerous Miracles. Read *Deuter.* xiii. 1, 2, 3, &c.

This is excellently expressed, and with advantage, by a great Man of our own; in these words, or to this effect. The Doctrine which we believe, that is, the Bible, hath been confirmed, as is confessed on all sides, by innumerable supernatural and truly Divine Miracles; and consequently the Doctrine of the *Roman* Church, which in many points is plainly opposite to the Bible, is condemned by them: I mean the Miracles of Christ and his Apostles. And therefore

if

if any ſtrange things have been done in that Church, they prove nothing but the truth of Scripture: which foretold, that (God's Providence permitting it, and the wickedneſs of the World deſerving it) *ſtrange ſigns, and wonders ſhould be wrought, to confirm falſe doctrine; that they which love not the Truth might be given over to ſtrong deluſions.* So that now we have reaſon rather to ſuſpect and be afraid of pretended Miracles, as ſigns of falſe Doctrine; than much to regard them, as certain arguments of Truth. *Neither is it ſtrange, that God ſhould permit ſome true wonders to be done, to delude thoſe who have forged ſo many wonders, to deceive the World.*

SECT. XVI.

Anſwer to another Objection.

BUT it is not likely, they ſay, that Religion ſhould be thus depraved in the *Roman* Church; becauſe their Anceſtors were Men of greater vertue and honeſty, than to ſuffer the leaſt alteration.

Which is the very thing that is alledged by the *Jews*, why they ſhould not believe our Saviour was unjuſtly condemned, and his Religion rejected by their Prieſts and Elders; as *Grotius* obſerves in the *Vth.* Book. Out of which I might produce ſeveral things, as I have done out of the foregoing, to prove the vanity of the *Romiſh* Traditions, as well as of the *Jewiſh*; and ſhew alſo how they have brought back *Judaiſm*, in a great meaſure, by the vaſt burden of Rites and

and Ceremonies, wherewith they have incumbered Christian Religion: But I shall wave all this (because I would make this Book as short as the rest) and only observe, in answer to what was now pretended; that whosoever shall consider (as he speaks of the Ancestors of the *Jews*) what kind of Men for several Ages sate in the Chair of *Rome*, and how ignorant the People generally were; he cannot wonder at the corruption, of which we complain.

Let him but read, *First*, the censures which their own Authors have passed upon several *Popes*, as meer Epicures, and Men void of all Religion, *&c.* And then the bitter complaints which St. *Bernard* himself makes (and that while he wrote to a Pope) of the Vices which were then annexed, even to the very *Papacy*: and further, the description which such Men, as *Marsilius* of *Padua* make of the Church of *Rome*, the whole Body of which, he saith, was so infected, by the plenitude of power, which is allowed to the Pope, that it might be more truly called a shop of Traffick, nay a Den of Thieves, than a Church of Christ: and (to come nearer to our own times) the forwardness of their People, even since the Reformation, to worship Men as Saints; before they were canonized by the Pope: and he will not think there hath been always such care and caution used about that and such like matters, as they would have us believe.

We have a memorable instance of this thing last mentioned (to meddle with no other) in the Founder of the Jesuits Order, *Ignatius Loiola:* by whose merits People recommended themselves to God (if we may believe the Pope himself) before he was declared to be a Saint.

So

So *Urban* VIII. informs us in his very *Bull* or *Decretal Letters* for his Canonization: where several miraculous Works are said to have been done for those, who fled to his help, and religiously worshipped his Image, and commended themselves to him (as the words are) with all their heart. He was made indeed a *Beato* by the preceeding Pope: But the like stories are told of *Xavier*, one of *Ignatius* his Companions, unto whose intercession the People applied themselves, and hoped in his merits (as the *Bull* for his Sainting tells us) even before he was made a *Beato*. So exceeding prone they have been of late to run into Superstition; as they were more long ago in the days of St. *Martin*, who broke down an Altar, which had been set up by former Bishops themselves, in honour of a Martyr, as the People called him: who proved to be no better than a *Highway-man* (as St. *Martin* discovered) that had been executed for his Robberies, and there buried.

SECT. XVII.

Popery and Mahometism had the same Original.

WE may safely therefore affirm, that the account which *Grotius* gives, in the beginning of the VI. Book, of the rise of *Mahometism*, may serve as well for the Original of *Popery*. Which took its rise from the great decay of true piety; and the vain jangling that fell out among Christian People, by imploying their

their time in curious Questions: which made the vulgar at last not know what to believe, and to lay the fault upon the Scriptures; nay to avoid them as hurtful and dangerous. And then it was easie to lead them any whither, when they had forsaken the Light which shewed them their way: and began also to place Religion, not in purity of mind, but in Rites and Ceremonies; and to content themselves in such things, as served rather to exercise the Body, than to amend the Soul.

In short, that false Prophet *Mahomet*, and an *Universal Bishop*, sprang up both together, very near the same time: as *Treason* and *Idolatry* setled themselves also together at the same time in the Age following. For the *Pope* under the pretence of retaining Images, which the *Constantinopolitane* Emperour destroyed, revolted from him; denyed him the tribute that was wont, till then, to be paid him, even out of *Rome* it self, as well as other places; and, denying him all obedience, plainly thrust him out of *Italy*. This account *Zonaras*, and others give of *Gregory* the II's proceeding against *Leo Isaurus*: and thus *the Bishop of Rome, by his Papal Authority, became the first Author of defection from a lawful Prince, upon the account of Religion.*

SECT.

SECT. XVIII.

And ſupports its ſelf by the ſame means.

IF we look further into what was ſaid before about *Mahometiſm*, we ſhall find that *Popery* ſtands, and upholds it ſelf, by the very ſame ſhameful means, which keep up the Religion of that falſe Prophet. By force, that is, and violence: compelling Men, where they have any power, to conſent to what they ſay, or rather to feign a conſent to what they do not believe. Which diſcovers the weakneſs of that Religion, and of the reaſons of thoſe that profeſs it: For he that extorts aſſent (as was ſaid in the Book foregoing) by ſenſe of pain, or fear of puniſhment; plainly confeſſes, by that very proceeding, that he diſtruſts his Arguments.

At the beſt, they require belief of Men, without all liberty of inquiring into Religion. For the vulgar (juſt as in *Turky*) are prohibited to read the Books which are accounted holy: which is a manifeſt ſign of its iniquity (as he there ſpeaks of the *Turkiſh* Religion;) for juſtly may that merchandize be ſuſpected, which is obtruded upon this condition; that it muſt not be lookt into, nor examined. This is the way of the groſſeſt deceivers; who will not ſubmit themſelves to a trial, and refuſe to give any account: but will have us ſubmit to their Authority, and take, what ſuch men as they ſay, upon truſt. Which is the Method of the *Roman* Church, who are wont to put *doubting of any part of their doctrine* among mortal ſins: And ſo, for fear what the

the issue may be, will not suffer their People to try their Religion; with indifference, that is, with true liberty of judgment, and with a resolution, to doubt of it, if the grounds of it appear upon examination to be uncertain, and to leave it, if they prove apparently false.

It is true indeed (as it there follows) there is not in every Man the like capacity of knowledge, and quicksightedness to discern between truth and falshood: Many also are carried away into error by pride; others by inordinate passions or affections; and some by custome and imitation, or by the weakness of their understandings, and forwardness to judge without due consideration, or advice with their proper Guides. But those very Books, which the *Roman* Church pretends may mislead Men (and therefore will not let them use) teach them in the first and principal place to purge themselves from all naughty affections; and then to be sober-minded, and not too forward to determine things on their own heads; but to reverence their judgments, who are over them in the Lord: and not to pretend to Religion, nor imagine they can judge a-right, till they be humble, and meek, and without any other design, than this alone of saving their Souls. Now the Divine Goodness forbids us to think, that such Men shall not be able to find the way to eternal Salvation, who seek for it in God's own Word, and in this manner; without any by-respect to honour or worldly advantage; and, with intire submission of themselves and all they have to Him, imploring his assistance, that they may attain it. Which are in effect, the very words of *Justin Martyr* and *Origen*.

And

And truly, since GOD hath implanted in Mens minds the power and faculty of judging; there is no part of truth that better deserves the imployment of this faculty about it, than that of which we cannot be ignorant without hazard of our Salvation. After this, whosoever inquires with a godly mind, he shall not dangerously err: And where should he enquire after it, but in God's most Holy Word? without which we cannot know whether there be either Church or Priest or any thing else, wherein they would have us trust.

SECT. XIX.

And refuses to be tried by Scripture.

IT is a manifest sign therefore of imposture, that, when they cannot for shame, but sometimes suffer their Religion to be tried, yet they will not have it tried by the holy Scriptures: *In the reading of which* (as was excellently said in the conclusion of the foregoing Books) *no man can be deceived, but he who hath first deceived himself.* For the Writers of them were more faithful, and fuller of Divine Inspiration, than either to defraud us of any necessary part of Divine Truth; or to hide it in a Cloud, so that we cannot see it.

Why then should any body decline this way of trial? unless they see themselves so manifestly condemned by the holy Scriptures; that they dare not let their cause be brought into so clear a light. Which hurts indeed sore eyes; but comforts

comforts and delights those that are sound: shewing us so plainly what we are to embrace and what to refuse, and being so sure and so perfect a Guide in all such matters; that St. *Hilary* not only commends and admires the Emperor *Constantius* for desiring a Faith, according to what was written: But saith, *He is an Antichrist who refuses this; and an Anathema that counterfeits it.* And thereupon calls to him in this manner; *O Emperor, thou seekest for Faith; hearken to it, not out of new little Papers, but of the Books of God.* There we must seek for it, if we mean to find it: and if they be silent and can tell us nothing (says St. *Ambrose*) who shall dare to speak? *Let us not therefore bring deceitful ballances* (they are the words of St. *Austin*, in his *second* Book of Baptism, Chap. vi.) *wherein we may weigh what we list, and as we list, after our own liking; saying, This is heavy, that is light: But let us bring the Divine Ballance, out of the holy Scriptures (as out of the Lords Treasures) and in that let us weigh what is most ponderous: or rather let not us weigh, but acknowledge those things, which are already weighed by the Lord.*

Yes, say they of the Church of *Rome*, we will be put into that Ballance, and tryed by the Scriptures; but not by them alone. Which is, in effect, to refuse to be tried by them: for they give testimony to their own fulness, and perfection and plainness too, in things necessary; and so do all other Christian Writers that succeeded the Apostles; who do not send us to turn over we know not how many other Volumes, but tell us here we may be abundantly satisfied. In so much that the first Christian Emperor *Constantine* (the Father of *Constantius*

now mentioned) admoniſhed the Biſhops in the famous Council of *Nice* to conſult with theſe heavenly inſpired Writings, as their Guide and Rule in all their Debates; becauſe *they perſpicuouſly inſtruct us*, (as his very words are) *what to believe in divine things, and therefore they ought*, he told them, *to fetch from thence, the Reſolution of thoſe things, which ſhould come in queſtion.* To which Cardinal *Bellarmine* indeed is pleaſed to ſay, that *Conſtantine* truly was *a Great Emperor, but no great Doctor*: But as herein he ſpeaks too ſcornfully of him; ſo he reflects no leſs upon the underſtanding and judgment of thoſe venerable Fathers aſſembled in that Council, which (as *Theodoret* tells us in his Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory) was compoſed of Men excelling in Apoſtolical gifts, and many of them carried in their Bodies the marks of the Lord Jeſus, and were, for the far greater part, a Multitude of Martyrs aſſembled together: who all conſented unto, and followed this wholſom counſel of the Emperour: (as he there teſtifies) knowing he did but ſpeak the ſenſe of the truly Catholick Church.

Which did not meerly bid Men hear it, and bring all doctrines to its touchſtone: but confeſſed plainly that even the Church it ſelf muſt be tried by the Scriptures. It is the expreſs ſentence of the ſame St. *Auſtin*, in his Book of the *Unity of the Church*. Where in the ſecond Chapter he ſaith, the queſtion then was (as it is now) *where is the Church?* Now what ſhall we do, ſays he? ſeek for it in our own words? or in the words of our Head, our Lord Jeſus Chriſt? *I think we ought to ſeek it rather in his words, who is the Truth; and beſt knows his own Body.* And in the

the beginning of the *third* Chapter, thus proceeds; *Let us not hear, thus say I, and thus sayest thou: but let us hear, thus saith the Lord. The Lords Books there are certainly; to whose authority we both consent, we both believe, we both yield obedience: there let us seek the Church; there let us discuss our cause.*

And to name no more, the Author of the imperfect work upon St. *Matthew*, (carrying the name of S. *Chrysostome*) declares this so fully, that it leaves no doubt in us, what course they took for satisfaction in this business. *Heretofore*, says he, *there were many ways, whereby one might know what was the true Church of Christ; and what was Gentilism: but now there is no way to know what is the true Church of Christ, but by the Scriptures. Why so? Because all those things which belong properly to Christ in truth and reality; those heresies have also in shew and in appearance. They have Scriptures, Baptism, Eucharist, and all the rest, even Christ himself; like as we have. Therefore if any would know which is the true Church of Christ; how should he know it, in such a confusion of multitude, but only by the Scriptures?* which he repeats over again a little after, *he therefore that would know which is the true Church of Christ, how should he know it but by the Scriptures?*

To them let us go, and in them let us rest: and if you are the Disciples of the Gospel, may we say to the *Romanists* (as *Athanasius* does to the followers of *Apolinarius*, in his Book about the *Incarnation of Christ*) 'Do not speak unrighteously against the Lord, but walk in what 'is written and done. But if you will talk of 'different things from what are written, why do 'you contend with us; who dare not hear nor

'speak, beside those things which are written? 'Our Lord telling us, *if you abide in the word,* 'even in my word, you shall be free indeed. What 'immodest frenzy is this, to speak things, which 'are not written? and devise things which are 'strangers to piety?

To which, if we faithfully adhere, there is this to be added for our incouragement; that though we should mistake in the sense of the Scriptures, yet they secure us, that if we with honest and upright hearts continue to inquire after the truth, (designing nothing else) that error shall not prejudice us: But God will either discover to us his mind, or not condemn us for our error of weakness, not of wilfulness.

SECT. XX.

The Vanity of their appeal to Traditions.

AS for Interpretations of Scripture by Tradition, they may be pretended and talkt of; but cannot be produced in most places, where we are desirous of that help: which we gladly receive, when we can have it by a truly Universal consent. But as for particular interpretations of the ancient Fathers, they do not absolutely agree with each other, in their Expositions of those Texts, upon which controversies of greatest moment are now grounded. Nay, they oft-times propound divers interpretations alike probable. And sometimes plainly intimate their doubtfulness, and make but imperfect conjectures; in such a manner, as if they

they intended to excite Posterity to seek for further resolution. Therefore we shall not dissent from them, though we do not assent to all their particular interpretations. Nay, we cannot more dissent from them, than by following their interpretations on such strict terms as the *Romanists* would bind us all to do; when they seem to make for their advantage. For then, there is not the least surmise or conjecture of any one Father, but must suffice against the joint Authority of all the rest. To which Rule (of serving their interest) they are so true, that they stick not to reject any interpretation of the Fathers, when they think good: and, which is more, to prefer their own expositions before theirs.

And so they do in the matter of all other Traditions, though called Apostolical. For instance, the threefold immersion in Baptism, *which seems to have flowed from an Apostolical Canon, is long ago abolished* (saith their *Canus*) *by a contrary custom.* And so is the custom of giving Communion to Infants (which prevailed, says their *Maldonate*, for 600 Years in the Church) not only antiquated by them, but decreed to be unlawful. Which clearly shews that they might, if they pleased, make an end of all the controversies that trouble the Church; without any disparagement (but rather with the increase) of its Authority. For challenging a power to alter even the Institutions of Jesus Christ, (as they have done in taking away the Cup from the People in the Holy Comunion) and much more those of the Apostles; what need all this stir about Apostolical Traditions, or the Decrees of the Church? which they may lay aside at their pleasure; and have laid aside, as appears by

many other instances, besides those now named, that may be given of it.

But it is sufficient for the direction of every honest hearted Man to know (which is as certain as any thing of that nature can be, and may be undoubtedly relyed on) that nothing is clearer in the Tradition of the Church than this: that the Doctors of it declare the Scriptures to be full and perspicuous in all needful matters. And therefore, there needs no other Tradition, but the Tradition of the Scriptures: which satisfie us abundantly, in the Truth of all those things which are universally received.

SECT. XXI.

And their guilt in what they say about the Holy Scriptures.

THERE cannot therefore be a greater demonstration of their guilt than this, that notwithstanding such evident testimonies from the Scriptures themselves, and the concurrent stream of the ancient Doctors of Christ's Church: they have been forced (to avoid this trial by the Scriptures (to say so many scandalous things as they have done, in disparagement of the Sacred Writings. Many of them are commonly known, and I am not willing to repeat the rest; but only say this great truth: that whether they will or no, their Church, such as it is, receives all its Authority from the Scriptures, and not the Scriptures from it. For we can have no notion, as was said before, of a Church, or of its Authority;

rity; but from the Scriptures. Which therefore must be of greater authority, than that which receives authority from them, and be first supposed to be infallible, before they can make us believe any thing else is so. For we must be secure of the proof before we can be sure of the thing proved by it; otherwise it is no proof, but leaves us as much in doubt as we were before it was alledged.

If they say (and what else can be said, with any colour of reason?) that we must indeed learn their Churches infallibility from the Scriptures; but then learn the rest from their Church: mark, I beseech you, what follows. Then it is manifest, *First*, that they themselves make the Scriptures the Rule of Faith, in this one Article, at least, concerning the Catholick Churches infallibility. Which we must therefore believe (and for no other reason) because the Scriptures which we first infallibly believe, do teach and prove it.

Whence it plainly follows that private Men may, and must be assured of the Truth of Scriptures (without the help of their Churches Authority) before they can believe any thing else: because it is the ground for their belief of that infallibility which their Church pretends; which to them is the General Rule of Faith.

And from thence it follows further, that the Scriptures, which to us are the only Rule of Faith, ought to be acknowledged by them to be more than so; even the Rule of their Rule of Faith. And if it be so; what reason can any Man alledge, why it should not be the immediate Rule of Faith (without sending us elsewhere to seek it) in all other Articles of the Creed, as

well as in that of their pretended infallible Church.

We may appeal to all the World, and call Heaven and Earth, Angels and Men to witneſs, between us and the *Roman* Church (as a worthy Champion of our Cauſe did long ago) whether the Articles of Chriſt's Incarnation, his Death, Paſſion, Burial, Reſurrection, Aſcenſion, Interceſſion, the Reſurrection of the Dead, and life everlaſting, *&c.* be not much more plainly ſet down in the Scriptures, to any Man's apprehenſion whatſoever; than the infallibility of the preſent *Roman* Church is, in ſuch words as theſe, *Thou art Peter*, &c. *Feed my Sheep*, or any other from whence they challenge it. And therefore why ſhould we be required to learn theſe, or any other part of Chriſtian Faith meerly from their Church, when we learn them ſo eaſily by the Scriptures; in which they are to be found more clearly delivered, than any thing we read about their Church?

Let no Man doubt, but if the Holy Ghoſt will teach us that Article of the Churches Infallibility, immediately by the Scriptures without the help of the Churches infallible Authority (as they themſelves are forced to confeſs, becauſe elſe the Church can have no authority;) then He will immediately teach us by the ſame Scriptures, any other Article of our Creed, and whatſoever is neceſſary to Salvation, which are plainly and perſpicuouſly enough ſet down in the Scriptures; without the help and aſſiſtance of the Churches infallible authority, which the Scriptures cannot be ſuppoſed to teach, but by places far more doubtful.

SECT.

SECT. XXII.

It is our Wisdom therefore to adhere to the Scriptures.

TO this Rule then let us stick; keeping those words of our Saviour always in mind, 3 *Joh.* 21, 22. *He that doth evil, hateth the light; neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doth truth, cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.* Let that be his Guide, who would not go astray in dangerous Paths; into which he cannot fall, who keeps close to the directions of the Holy Books: wherein all necessary Truth being set down, as the most ancient and best Doctors unanimously agree, we are certain (every way) by believing them, to believe all necessary Truth; and if our lives be accordingly (without which, they tell us, our belief will be vain) it is impossible we should fail of everlasting Salvation.

To these alone (as St. *Austin* speaks for himself, in his Book of *Nature and Grace*) we owe an absolute consent, without refusing any thing they propound to us. *Whatsoever it be* (as his words are in his CXII. Epistle) *that is confirmed by the perspicuous authority of the divine Scriptures, those*, viz. *which are canonical in the Church; it must be believed without any doubting. But as for any other witnesses or testimonies, to which thou art perswaded to give credit; thou mayest believe them, or not believe them, according as thou perceivest them deserve or not deserve*

to

to be relied on. A great reverence is due to the Church and its teſtimony (though leſs to the preſent Church of *Rome* than others; becauſe it hath ſo groſly abuſed the World by falſe records, and forged Miracles, and ſuch like things) yet only as to an humane Teſtimony; which cannot equal that of the Holy Scriptures.

SECT. XXIII.

Which have more manifeſt notes of certainty than the Church.

FOR if we take their own way and method, to aſſure our minds that we follow an infallible Guide, there is no *note* which they give of the true Church, which they ſay ought to be our Guide; but pleads far more ſtrongly for the Holy Scriptures, that we ſhould rather follow them, and give an undoubted credit to them. I ſhall not run over all thoſe *Notes*, nor examine the certainty of them; but only briefly name ſome of them, and ſhew, that if they prove any thing, it is the Authority of the Scriptures above the Church.

Firſt, they ſay, the very *name of the Catholick Church* is venerable, and ought to be regarded. But, as that Name is not proper to them alone, ſo, if there be any power in Names to make us reſpect any thing; what more awful than the Name of the *Word of God*, and the *Sacred Scriptures*, which were always given to theſe Books, to which we adviſe all Chriſtians to adhere.

The

The next Note, which is *Antiquity*, is on the side of the Scriptures also; which more justly claim to be ancienter than all other Books, which pretend to any Divinity; than the Catholick Church can claim to be ancienter than all other Societies, which call themselves by the Name of a Church. Nay, the Doctrine contained therein, must be supposed, as I have shewn, to be before the Church; which is made by belief and profession of that Doctrine: and the Old Testament certainly written, long before the Church was made Catholick.

As for *unity*, in that the Church is not comparable to the Scriptures, whose agreement and consent of parts is admirable. And if we speak of the surest bond of true *Catholick Unity*, it is as manifest as the *Sun*, that the *Holy Scriptures* lay the foundation of it, and preserve us in it (if we adhere to them) by keeping us close to *one Lord*, *one Faith*, *one Baptism*: but the Church of *Rome*, which hath usurped the Name of *Catholick*, makes this blessed Unity impossible. For, there being but two ways to it, either that we all agree in our Opinions about Religion, or that while we differ, it be no hinderance to Communion; they have made the latter as impossible as the former: because they make it absolutely necessary to communion and salvation, to believe in every thing as they do.

The like might be said of *Holiness* and *efficacy* of Doctrine (which depends upon the Churches speaking according to the Scriptures) *sanctity of the authors* of our Religion (which cannot be known but out of the Scriptures) the *glory of Miracles*, the *light* of *Prophecy*, and all the rest: but I shall only touch upon one more, the *Amplitude*

tude and *Universality* of the Church, in which they make their boast. But herein the Scriptures most evidently excel; their Authority being there sacred, where the Church of *Rome* (whose Notes these are) is not known, or not regarded. For all Christians in the World, of whatsoever Sect they be, believe the Scriptures to be the Word of God: whereas they alone say, that they are the only true Church of God. All Christians besides, who know any thing of this pretence of theirs, absolutely deny it; and maintain the Divinity and Authority of the Scriptures, against all their Cavils.

SECT. XXIV.

The great incouragement we have to do so.

BY following the Scriptures then, we follow the surest Guide by their own confession. For *first*, by following the Scriptures, we are certainly led by God; but by following the Church, we are only led by Men. And consequently the Faith we build upon the Scriptures is a *Divine* Faith; but the Faith we build upon the authority of the Church meerly, can be no more than *humane*. For the Scriptures are fully and amply proved to be of Divine Authority, by all those Arguments, which are alledged in the *Third* Book of this Work: the like to which cannot be produced to prove the infallible authority of the Church. Which cannot so much as pretend that God hath bid us believe it, but by sending us to the Holy Scriptures; from whence it derives all its Authority. Which

Which is the *second* thing to be considered (and here I will take the liberty to transcribe part of the discourse of a great Man on this Subject, with some Additions) that by following the Scriptures, we follow that which they themselves are forced to follow (as was noted before) and on which they entirely depend, for the proof of their own authority; on which they would have us entirely depend. Who have reason rather to rely, on that which they rely: and in so doing tacitly confess the Scriptures are of greatest authority; and that they are surer of their Truth, than of the Churches Infallibility.

And *Thirdly*, by following the Scriptures, we follow that which must be true, if their Church (which they would have us follow) have any truth in it; for their Church cannot but give attestation to them: whereas, if we follow their Church we must follow that which, though the Scriptures be true, may be false; nay, which, if the Scriptures be true, must be false, because the Scriptures testifie against it.

Further, *Fourthly*, to follow the Scriptures, we have God's express Warrant, and Commandment; without any colour for any prohibition: but to believe their Church infallible, we have no commandment, much less any express Commandment; nay, have reason to think, we are prohibited so to do in such words as those, *Beware of false Prophets. Believe not every Spirit, but try the Spirits whether they are of God, &c.* Which require us to examine before we trust; and consequently not to give up our

our ſelves blindfold to thoſe who confidently claim the infallibility of St. *Peter*; but cannot produce any evidence of it.

Again, *Fifthly*, by following the Scriptures, we ſhall keep to that which was always believed, and every where received: but by following the Church of *Rome* we ſhall make our ſelves guilty of the changes and alterations which they have made (as another great Champion of our Church hath obſerved) *in the Apoſtolical Creed*, (by making a new one, containing things that hold no conformity with the Apoſtles) and in the *Apoſtolical ſucceſſion* (by ingroſſing the whole ſucceſſion to *Rome*, and making other Biſhops to be but the *Pope*'s Deputies, as to their Juriſdiction) and in the *Apoſtolical Government* (by erecting a new and Univerſal Monarchy in the Church) and laſtly in the *Apoſtolical Communion*, by excommunicating the greateſt part of the holy Catholick Church.

By *Sixthly*, following the *Roman* Church alſo, we ſhall be bound to hold many things, not only above Reaſon, but againſt it: whereas by following the Scriptures, we ſhall only believe ſome Myſteries, but no impoſſibilities, ſome things above reaſon, but nothing contrary to it. For, though there be things in Scripture, which had they not been revealed, reaſon could not have diſcovered; yet there is nothing there, which being revealed, can by true reaſon be confuted.

Seventhly, Contrary to fleſh and blood indeed there are many things contained in the Scriptures;

ptures; and therefore by following them, we shall believe a Religion, which notwithstanding that great prejudice which Men had to it, prevailed and inlarged it self over the World in a short time; without any assistance from worldly power, wit or policy; nay, against all these: whereas the *Roman* Church hath got all its Authority over Mens Consciences, by no other means, than by devising false Records, false Miracles and Reports (as was said before) and by complying with Mens corrupt affections, or by persecuting those that would not comply; and by all other such like worldly means, whether of policy or force.

Eighthly, To which add, that by following the Scriptures, we shall believe a Religion, whose first Preachers and Professors could have no worldly ends to serve (as hath been demonstrated in the foregoing Books) but rather were to expect, as they every where found, nothing but disgrace, vile nay cruel usage, by all manner of punishments: whereas the head of the *Roman* Church, it is even palpable, makes their Religion the Instrument of his Ambition, and seeks thereby to intitle himself, directly or indirectly, to the Monarchy of the World: And besides, it is evident to him that hath but half an eye, as we say, that most of the Doctrines which they have added to the Scriptures, make one way or other, for the honour or temporal advantage of the Teachers of them.

Ninthly, Again, following the Scriptures, we shall embrace a Religion of admirable simplicity: whereas the *Roman* Church and doctrine

is

is even loaded with an infinity of weak, childish, unsavory Superstitions and Ceremonies: under which its own Children have groaned and heavily complained.

Tenthly, Those Holy Books also teach us, that we must not promise our selves salvation, unless we effectually mortifie all our evil affections and lusts; and forsaking every sin whatsoever, betake our selves to the practice of all Christian Vertue: But the *Roman* Church opens an easier and broader way to Salvation; permitting at least this to be taught for as good and Catholick Doctrine as any other; that though a Man have continued all his life long in a course of sin, without the practice of any vertue, he may notwithstanding be let into Heaven by an act of attrition at the hour of Death, if joyned with confession, or by an act of Contrition without Confession. And therefore in this and several other regards, the Religion of that Church is not so Holy, as the Doctrine of Christ and his Apostles delivered in the Scriptures: and consequently is not so likely to come, from the Fountain of Holiness and Goodness.

Eleventhly, But whatsoever ways they are pleased to devise, to humour Mens depraved appetites, we are sure of this advantage by following the Scriptures, which they cannot pretend to by following their Church. That if we happen to entertain an erroneous opinion, grounded, as we think, upon some place of Scripture, it is implicitly retracted and condemned, by our precedent full and intire assent to all things contained in the Scriptures; and our general reso-

lution

lution to hold nothing contrary to them, nor admit any thing (as necessary to salvation) that cannot be proved by them. Which makes the error that we unwittingly and unwillingly hold against the Scriptures, less dangerous: because our adherence to the Scriptures is nearer, closer and firmer, than it is to our particular error. Whereas by following their Church, not knowing what it is (whether the whole Body of People in that Communion, or a General Council, or the *Pope*, in, or out of a Council) we shall have no such excuse for our errors: but they will be rather much aggravated, by our adhering so strictly to a doubtful and uncertain Rule; unto which the People in that Communion sticking closer, than they do to the Word of God, it lessens the value of all the Truths which they believe, and doubles the guilt of all their errors.

And *lastly*, as this is a great satisfaction to our selves, so there is this to be added for the comfort of others also. That by following the Scriptures, we shall learn to bear with one another in our different opinions, about things which cannot thereby be determined; nay, in things which are not directly against it, or wherein we are not yet sufficiently instructed: But by following the *Roman* Church we shall be taught to pass the heaviest sentences upon all those, that believe not in all things, as we do; nay, to take the severest courses with them, though they be Men of the most innocent and useful lives; conforming themselves in all things to the Precepts of Christ Jesus, and to the Authority of their Governours for his sake, where it doth not manifestly contradict Him.

To conclude this, we for our parts are of the same mind, even towards them, which *Grotius* before observed the Apostles were of towards the *Jews*: *From whom*, saith he (and let the words be taken, as if spoken by us, to those of the *Roman* Communion) *they would not so much as exact an acknowledgment of their happiness, in being delivered from the heavy Yoke of Rites and Ceremonies that lay upon them*: *But, if they would admit of the Commandments of Christ, which are full of all goodness, easily permitted them to follow what course of life they pleased in matters of indifferency; provided they would not impose the necessity of observing them upon others.*

SECT. XXV.

Conclusion of all.

UPON these terms we are ready to agree with them; and I conclude all with this memorable Proposal, which *Erasmus* made in a Letter to *Johannes Slechta*, a Friend of his in *Bohemia*, at the very beginning of the Reformation, MDXIX.

This would reconcile People to the Church of Rome, *if all things were not so particularly defined, and made a matter of Faith, which we would have to belong to it: but those only which are evidently expressed in the Holy Scriptures; or without which we do not see any way to be saved.*

To

To this purpose a few things are sufficient; and a few things may be sooner perswaded than a great many.

Now out of one Article, we make Six Hundred: some of which are such, that, without endangering Piety, we may either be ignorant, or doubt of them. And, such is the nature of Mankind, that what is once defined, we hold tooth and nail; and will by no means part with it.

But when all's done, the summ of Christian Philosophy lies in this; That we understand all our Hope to be placed in God, who freely gives us all things by his Son Jesus; by whose Death we are redeemed, into whose Body we are planted by Baptism; that being dead to the lust of this World, we may live according to his Doctrine and Example; not only abstaining from all evil, but indeavouring to deserve well of every Body: and that if any adversity happen, we bear it couragiously, in hope of a future reward; which, without all doubt, waits for all pious Persons at the coming of Christ: and that we make such progress from vertue to vertue; as notwithstanding to arrogate nothing to our selves, but to ascribe all the good, that is in us, or that we can do, unto GOD.

These things chiefly are to be inculcated, and beaten into the minds of Men; so that they become, as it were, their Nature. But if any will search into those things, which are more abstruse about the Divine Nature, the Hypostasis of Christ, or the Sacraments, that they may raise their minds the higher, and draw them from things here below; let them do so: provided that every body be not compelled presently to believe, what seems good to this or that Person.

For as out of large Deeds arise sooner Law-suits; so are differences begotten, by very many definitions.

And let us not be ashamed to answer to some things, God knows how it may be done: it is sufficient for me to believe that it is done.

I know that Christ's pure Body and Blood is to be purely received by those that are Pure; and that He would have this to be a most holy token and pledge, both of his love to us, and of our Christian concord among our selves. And therefore I will examine my self, and make a strict search; whether there be any thing in me that ill agrees with Christ; whether any discord with my Neighbour.

But how the Ten Predicaments are there, how the Bread is Transubstantiated by the mystical words, (or, as He explains himself in the latter end of his Book, upon lxxxiv. Psal.) *how the body of Christ is there, whether under the substance of Bread, or under the species of Bread and Wine, and such like; doth not much conduce, in my judgment, to proficiency in piety,* &c.

By these, and other such innumerable disputatations, in which some triumph; the minds of Men are called away from those things, which alone are to the purpose.

To conclude, it will be of great moment to establish the concord of the World; if all Secular Princes, and especially the Bishop of Rome, *would abstain from all appearance of Tyranny, and of Covetousness.*

For Men easily start back, when they see slavery is prepared for them; when they see they are not invited to piety, but inveigled to be made a prey.

If they perceive us to be harmless, to be beneficent; they will most easily credit us, and intrust themselves with us. Thus He.

It

It would not be very hard to make a longer Book on this Subject: But this is sufficient (as *Grotius* speaks in the beginning of this Discourse, about the *Truth of Christian Religion*) to convince those whose understandings are rightly disposed, and are not pertinaciously set against all further information. But no arguments can be found of force enough to convince a froward will, and perswade perverse affections: which make Men uncapable of Moral Truth, most of all of Divine. *Which will not enter* (as the wise man speaks) *into a malicious Soul; nor dwell in the Body that is subject unto sin. For the Holy Spirit of Discipline will flee deceit, and remove from thoughts that are without understanding, and will not abide when unrighteousness cometh in.*

THE END.

A

RECAPITULATION

OF THE

Principal Things handled

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